



THE FALCON

ISSUE NO. 24

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA REGIMENTAL FAMILY

WINTER 2012

OBSERVATORY RIDGE & FESTUBERT MEMORIALS DEDICATED

By BGen (ret) G Young OMM, MSM, CD

The September issue of the Falcon reported that Phase Two of the 15th Battalion Memorial Project had been successfully achieved. At that time the memorials at Observatory Ridge and Festubert were under construction with unveiling and dedication ceremonies scheduled for October. The Project Team delegation, consisting of HCol John Newman, BGen (ret) Greg Young and Captains (ret) Vic Goldman, Steve Gilbert and Festubert Memorial doner Capt (ret) Stephan Tremblay, departed Canada on 17 October and arrived at their usual base of operations at Varlet Farm, Poelkapelle, Belgium in the Ypres salient the next day. Once on the ground, we were joined by LCol (ret) Gerry Carline, RCA, who acted as our event photographer, freelance journalist Richard Foot from Halifax, who covered the dedications as well as other project events scheduled for this trip and our European project team member, Simon Godly, who was the coordinator for all aspects of the Festubert memorial and dedication.

The four days prior to dedications were occupied with project work: the team made site inspection visits to both of the new sites as well as to the sites of the memorials erected in 2010; courtesy calls were made to Talbot House in Poperinghe, the offices of the Commonwealth war Graves Commission, St George's Memorial Church and Ieper City Hall (Cloth Hall), all in Ypres; the team toured the Memorial Museum, Passchendaele new 1917 extension, under construction, and then attended a conference with their staff, regarding the 15th Battalion exhibit; and, more area cemeteries were surveyed as



ABOVE: The new Regimental Memorial to the 15th Battalion's Action in the 1916 battle of Mount Sorrel. It is located on Observatory Ridge, near the town of Zillebeke, Belgium, in the area of World War One's Ypres Salient.

part of developing the ongoing photographic database of 15th Battalion grave markers.

The unveiling and dedication of the Observatory Ridge memorial took place at 16:00hrs on 22 October and despite the time of year, it was an unseasonably warm and sunny afternoon. The City of Ypres had done outstanding work, on the construction of the memorial and the preparation of the site, as a donation to the Project. The Canadian, Belgian and Ieper flags flew on three large poles erected immediately behind the memorial and across the valley, in the

distance, loomed Mount Sorrel itself, which had been the objective on that day in June 1916. The memorial, with these permanent flag poles, is visible across that entire portion of the salient and most certainly stands out for all to see. BGen Greg Young welcomed everyone and provided a historical overview of the battle for Mt Sorrel in June 1916 and the 15th Battalion's role in the counterattack against Observatory Ridge. This was followed by speeches made by Ms. Beatrice Maille of The Canadian Embassy on behalf of Canada, Burgomeester, M. Luc Dehaene on behalf of the City of Ieper and HCol John Newman on behalf of the Regiment. The memorial, draped with the current Canadian flag and a period Red Ensign, was jointly unveiled by Mrs Maille and HCol John Newman and consecrated by Reverend Brian Llewellyn of St George's Memorial Church Ieper. This was followed by the traditional playing of The Last Post and Reveille by buglers of The Menin Gate Last Post

Association and The Flowers of the Forest by a lone piper from the Passchendaele Pipes & Drums.

The visibility of the Memorial Project has steadily increased since 2007, especially following the successful Phase One memorial dedications in 2010 and this was in evident by the size and composition of the audience, which included a Consular Official and Military Attache from the Canadian Embassy, the Burgomeester and officials of the City of Ieper, representatives of The Western Front Association, The Royal Canadian Legion, The British Legion, The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, The Passchendaele Society, 1917, The Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917, The Passchendaele 1917

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

INSIDE:

CO's Message.....	2
A New HLCol.....	3
EX Highland Thresher.....	4
A New Regimental Memorial in Rome.....	8

Beneath the Ground Near Vimy.....	19
The Regiment's Own War Horse.....	21
If these Cards Could Talk.....	23
New Uniforms for the 48th Cadets.....	25

"That Dileas Spirit" DVD - a Hit.....	30
A New Sculpture for the Regiment's 120th.....	33
Remembrance Day at Sunnybrook.....	34
In Memoriam.....	40



A Message from the Commanding Officer

HIGHLANDERS, HAPPY NEW YEAR!

It was an exceptionally busy Fall, both for the Active Battalion and the Regimental Family. Key undertakings saw the Battalion take on the role of training lead for five units within Battle Group Bravo, our exceptional 120th Anniversary Remembrance Celebrations, the Change of Command, deployment our soldiers to Alabama, and multiple outreach activities, such as the Fifty Man Guard of Honour at the Royal Winter Fair.

Of significant note and courtesy of the Canadian draw down in Afghanistan, this past December marked the first occasion in seven years that all of our Active members were home with their families for Christmas. Further endeavors, such as the on-going 15th Battalion project and the well-received visit by the 48th Highlanders of Holland Pipes & Drums continued our pledge to remember past sacrifices, while also focusing on our integrated future.

It is also important to mention the development and growth of our 48th Cadet Corps, the 48th Highlanders' musical CD, recently put together by the Military Association Band and the Pipes & Drums and the commemorative Regimental DVD, "That Dileas Spirit," which recognizes the service of members of the 1st Battalion during the Second World War.

The New Year promises to be just as busy with the Battalion undertaking further deployments to the United States and Battle Group level defensive exercises. There will also be various social functions, such as the Regimental Ball. It is my firm belief that the best way to challenge our active soldiers is through dynamic training, physical fitness,

partnerships abroad, and an emphasis on the warrior spirit. For the Regimental family, it is a focus on local outreach, public remembrance, and support to our personnel returning from overseas deployments.

By emphasizing the military virtues of duty, honour, integrity, discipline, and the unwritten rule of always maintaining a sense of humour, we will continue to build on our Unit's greatest asset - our people. All of you have contributed in some way to the success of this Regiment and, for that, you have your Command Team's sincerest thanks.

DILEAS!

*ALLAN BEST
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL
COMMANDING OFFICER*



PROMOTIONS AND AWARDS

PROMOTIONS SINCE 01 OCT

*** TO CPL ***

Pte J. Li 700
Pte A.S. Ater
Pte S.L. Naula

*** TO MCPL ***

Cpl S. Kim 865

*** TO SGT ***

MCpl J. Alban

*** TO 2LT ***

OCdt L.D.F Blake

GENERAL CAMPAIGN STAR OVER 210 DAYS

Pte Choi BAR
MCpl Thomas BAR

CANADIAN DECORATION (CD)

Cpl A.J. Montcalm

CD 1

Maj A.G. Poles

CD 2

Maj M.A. Bossi

COMMANDING OFFICER'S COIN

*** A COY ***

Pte Park Top Candidate BIQ

Cpl Kim Top Candidate on PLQ

MCPL Moore

Above and beyond when it comes to his time commitments. Volunteers for every instructing opportunity (eg. DP2A and BMQ), helped out on almost every course that Bravo ran this fiscal while still helping in A coy, participating in the G20 with Toronto Police Corrections department, going to Police college, and finishing in getting hired full time by Toronto Police Services.

Sgt Leandro

stepped in several times to cover for CSM

Sgt Oliynykov

stepped in several times to cover CSM, work in Ops before Sgt Jeapes arrived

*** B COY ***

MCPL Kowalenko

Has a near perfect attendance record, has single handedly taken every B Coy NCO duty shift, was a Section Commander in 2 PI A Coy last Fall, helped out on the pre-PLQ course, and is instructing on both DP2A courses that are in the hopper now. Outstanding dress and deportment and is highly dedicated and capable up and coming junior NCO

*** BAND ***

PM Lang

The PM has been the Senior Pipe Major of the Canadian International Tattoo in Hamilton for the past three years and the Senior Pipe Major of the RCMI Band Spectacular for the past five. He is one of the top three Pipe Majors in the reserves and is constantly being asked for input regarding our trade by other Pipe's Major and others in the CF. He also works at St. Andrew's College assisting in the instruction of the Pipers at that school and advising on military piping issues to increase their bearing and presence. And for the past several summers has

been on staff at the Cadets Camp in Borden (Blackdown) as one of the senior NCO staff and the piping director.

DM Reesor

The DM is the senior DM in the Pipes and Drums world in the CF Reserves and this past year was the Senior DM for the Canadian Contingent that went to the Virginia International Tattoo and also the Senior Pipes and Drums DM of the Tattoo as part of the production team. He was requested by name and has been asked to return again this year in the same capacity on the production team. He was in charge of over 60 CF members and a total of 140 pipes and drums from all over the world. He was also the Senior DM of the RCMI concert, filling in last minute due to an illness as the Senior DM of the Canadian International Tattoo in Hamilton, the Senior DM of the Fergus Games Tattoo on the Friday night, and was the DM for the Queen's official departure from Canada a year and a half ago as well as many other events.

Sgt Locke

Was an instructor at the School of Music this past summer and did an exceptional job

WO Dewar

Was employed extra regimentally at the Tor Scots as their PM and did an exceptional job.

*** BOR ***

Sgt Parris

For the hard work and dedication to the welfare of the soldiers. The 48th Highlanders were without a CC and Sgt Parris came out of retirement. With over 30 years of experience she brought knowledge and guidance to the BOR.

*** COIN and CERTIFICATE ***

Pte Marjoram

Pte Marjoram has been an addition to the 48th. Whatever task was assigned to him he exceeded all expectations and often did jobs of a higher rank. Pte Marjoram dedicated many weekends to the Regiment and took on all of the RSM's special projects.

Pte Marjoram went far above what was required of him.



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

falcon_newsletter@hotmail.com

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

This issue of the **FALCON** published by

Capt Steve Gilbert - Editor

Sgt (ret'd) Adam Bernard - Design

for more info about Adam Bernard's graphic design services please visit:

www.adambernard.ca or call **647-428-5817**

A Special Message from the Honourary Colonel

When Marco Polo returned to Venice, from his epic journey to China, he brought back to Europe two unique discoveries: the formula for pasta and the ancient proverb "With patience very good things happen". Thus in this year, the year of the Dragon, a very good thing has happened to our serving Regiment and our Regimental Family. Colonel Geordie Elms MSM, CD has been appointed Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of the 48th Highlanders of Canada, by the Minister of National Defence.

Geordie has been a strong supporter of all things Regimental, since joining the Pipes and Drums at the age of thirteen. In addition to his interest our Regimental Associations and the 48th Cadet Corps, Geordie follows in the footsteps of his father, RSM Bill Elms, with a deep interest in military history and in our Museum.

I look forward to serving with Geordie, throughout the next three years.

DILEAS GU BRATH

JOHN B. NEWMAN

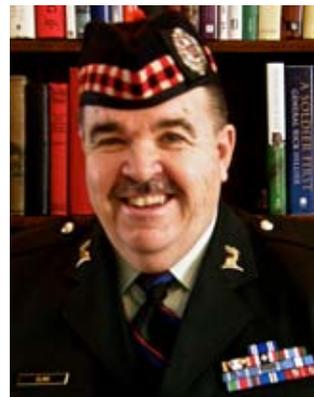
HONORARY COLONEL



Colonel Geordie Elms, MSM,CD (Retired) Appointed Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel

The Minister of Defence has approved the appointment of Col (Retd) Geordie Elms as Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel of the 48th Highlanders of Canada effective 23 January 2012.

Col (Retd) Geordie Elms followed his father (RSM Bill Elms) and grandfather (Capt George Elms) into the Regiment in 1967, when he joined the Pipes and Drums. Later, Lt Elms transferred to the Regular Force, in 1975. Over the next 36 years he served with The RCR on regimental duty in Petawawa, Germany, Winnipeg and Gagetown. He served on operations and peacekeeping duties in Cyprus (76-77), Lebanon and Israel (83-85), Afghanistan and Pakistan (88-89) and Bosnia (92-93). From 2000 to 2003 he served as Commanding Officer of



The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada. He served as the Canadian Defence Attaché in Pakistan (2003-6), Afghanistan (2006-7) and in Israel (2008-10). HLCol Elms was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for service in South West Asia (2008) and Chief of Defence Staff Commendation for meritorious service in Beirut (1985) and a second CDS Commendation for his work during the Pakistan Earthquake (2005). He received the Foreign Affairs Deputy Ministers Award for service during the Gaza Evacuation of 2008.

In December 2010 after 43 years in uniform that began in 1967 as a 48th piper Colonel Elms, his wife Shirley and 'Naik the Wonder Dog' retired after 36 years with The RCR. They now divide their time between their home in Dundas and their cottage in Haliburton. Shirley is also a third generation Highlander, the granddaughter of RSM Fred Gledhill and daughter of CSM Bruce Gledhill. Recently the 48th Chapter IODE asked Mrs. Elms to accept the appointment of Honorary Regent. HLCol Elms and Shirley are happy to be home and humbled at being given the privilege of serving again with the Highlanders. 🎶



ON EXERCISE IN GEORGIA

By Lt Simon Kassissia

The 48th Highlanders of Canada returned from EX HIGHLAND THRASHER having experienced a longer, sunnier, louder, warmer, tastier and more exiting weekend than was experienced by most Torontonians recently. Having gathered at Moss Park Armoury a day earlier than we normally deploy for a weekend exercise, the anticipation was high. We were about to head to Alabama to train with the 2/121 Infantry Regiment of the Georgia National Guard, which is a unit of the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. A relationship with these U.S. Counterparts was forged almost a decade ago, and it would be up to us to rekindle it. Much had transpired in the intervening years; the “Second Foot,” as they are colloquially referred to, saw deployments to Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan and took heavy casualties over the course of those deployments.

An interesting last minute development was that we would not be flying commercial air as had been originally planned; a CC-177 Globemaster III was available to fly us to Anniston from Trenton. We bussed down to 2 Air Movements Squadron in Trenton and departed from the military equivalent of a passenger terminal. From there we entered the belly of the beast that is the Globemaster. The aircraft we took down to Anniston, Alabama was one of four that comprise Canada’s strategic airlift capability. It is capable of airlifting armoured vehicles, tons of supplies, or a large number of troops. The versatility of the aircraft was impressive; the interior was replete with

BGen Young receives Meritorious Service Medal



Brigadier-General Gregory Achilles Young, O.M.M., M.S.M., C.D., of Windsor, received a Meritorious Service Medal (Military Division) from Governor-General David Johnson at Rideau Hall in Ottawa yesterday.

The Meritorious Service Medal (Military Division) recognizes a military deed or activity that has been performed in a highly professional manner or of a very high standard that brings benefit or honour to the Canadian Forces.

As deputy commanding general of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan from November 2006 to May 2007, Brigadier-General Young worked with the President of Afghanistan and his Minister of the Interior to establish a legitimate and professional national police force.

His dedicated efforts were instrumental in establishing the rule of law, extending the government’s legitimacy and transitioning the nation to democracy.

Brigadier-General Young’s leadership tremendously increased the country’s policing capabilities, bringing great credit to the Canadian Forces and to Canada.

THE ACTIVE BATTALION



About to redeploy



C6 Gunners



In the Belly of the Beast

equipment that could be used to customize the aircraft for any purpose. Not to mention the sheer power. On takeoff and landing we soon learned that the Globemaster's engines were not to be taken lightly.

We landed in Anniston without incident. It is near the famous Talladega racetrack. We hit the road in short order after linking up with some National Guard Transport and headed into the training area. After passing a few roadside waffle houses and Liquor/Beer/Guns stores, we arrived at our Exercise location and linked up with A and C Company of the 2/121. The senior leadership peeled off to attend a planning exercise and we were issued weapons and headed into the field.

Training included setting up a defensive position on a ridge, climbing an obscenely large

hill only to find role players laying IEDs at the top of it, reacting to and setting ambushes, and surviving the multiple varieties of gravy that were served with the fresh rations along with a healthy dose of "grits". All the while, two of our pipers were on hand to share a bit of our culture with our U.S. counterparts. I'll tell you that the "U.S. Army Song," on bagpipes, is a stirring prelude to an attack; and a piper playing "Amazing Grace," over the bodies of the defeated "enemy force" soldiers, was an even better finishing touch.

We had a great exercise and the soldiers learned much through their close integration with the Guardsmen. After a moving ceremony, where we got a crash course on U.S. parade square drill and accumulated a large amount of souvenirs, we headed off to the airport for a

short wait before our flight. But it was not to be.

After we settled in to our waiting area, the CO pulled us all together and said that he had good news and bad news.

The good news: it was a great exercise.

The bad news: our flight would be delayed for 24 hours due to a mechanical issue on our aircraft.

Thanks to the outstanding hospitality of our American hosts and our magnanimous CO, we had a great time waiting to leave the great state of Alabama. You'd be surprised how enjoyable a night in an abandoned office building can be with a couple of beers and enough fried chicken.



CSM Carswell and WO Dewar

TRENCHES AND KILTS

Captain Tyler Wentzell

The soldiers of A Company have had a busy training year, spending plenty of time in kilts and trenches alike. The company took to the field and the parade square with the same aggressive and determined spirit that has long characterized the fighting sub unit of the 48th Highlanders.

A Company has a brand new command team. Captain Ron Alkema has taken the reigns as Officer Commanding. This is his second time serving as a member of the company's command team. Previously, he served as the Company Sergeant Major, before taking his commission. Master Warrant Officer Paul Carswell, recently returned from Cyprus and the often hair-raising experience of facilitating soldiers' decompression, to become our new Company Sergeant Major. Then there is me: Captain Tyler Wentzell, a recent component transfer from the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry; I'm the Company Second in Command. Finally, the company has a new Administration Officer; 2Lt Lawrence Blake has assumed this least appreciated position in the company.

There are other new OCs, as well. Lt Jason Hsiung, recently returned from a year long tour in Afghanistan, and Sergeant Jeff Leandro took over 1 Platoon. 2Lt Ed Gorham took command of 2 Platoon, with Sergeant Ivan Oliynykov as second in command and Master Corporal Jeremy Moore took over as the Reconnaissance Section Commander.

The Company did spend a great deal of time in their kilts this year, almost all of it in the public eye. The Change of Command Parade, the opening ceremonies of the Royal Winter Fair, and Regimental Remembrance Day, all gave the Company the chance to show off their Highland regalia and skill at bashing the square. The Company did well, as always, and put on a great show.

Concurrent to all of the pomp and circumstance, the company continued to strive for tactical excellence. This year, the battle task standard for 32 Brigade is the defence, not of Forward Operating Bases as has become more familiar to the younger soldiers, but from trenches dug the old fashioned way. The company pursued a two-tiered training plan, providing the appropriate training to leadership and soldiers, in order to jog the memories of those who had not been in the defence for many years and to teach those who had never experienced it. The result was successful, and the company provided the hard left shoulder for Training Group B on Exercise BADGER DRIVE, defeating the attempted incursions of the West Isle Armed Forces.

Hard-digging and rain always seem to accompany defensive operations, and BADGER DRIVE was no exception. As always, however, our soldiers continued to impress everyone with their perseverance and good humour. It did not hurt that every soldier knew that, unlike the Highlanders who have gone before, our time in our trenches, and our time in our kilts, would not overlap.

RIGHT: Jonas Alkema (age 3) holding hands with his father, Capt Ron Alkema on parade in front of A Coy, at the Regimental Remembrance Day Ceremony held at Queen's Park on Sunday 06 November, 2011. Photo by Jim Matz. TOP RIGHT: Remembrance Day Parade Sunday 06 November, 2011. Photo by Dave Archer.



48TH HIGHLANDER'S PIPES & DRUMS

By Drum Major (WO) Chris Reesor

The Pipes and Drums continue to maintain a very busy performance schedule and since the last Falcon have continued a long standing tradition by performing for the opening of the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey Season. The tradition started in 1931 and we have played every home opener since then. It began, in part, due to the close relationship that existed between Conn Smythe (himself a WWI veteran) and the 48th. Both the Maple Leafs Sports and Entertainment organization and the 48th Highlanders of Canada Pipes and Drums look forward each year to continuing this tradition.



Photo courtesy Pte S. Marjoram

Soon after this event, we were parading for the change of CO. This was a long and exhausting weekend full of drill rehearsals and practice, but it was all worth it in the end.

It was followed by the annual RCMI concert at Roy Thomson Hall (RTH). This annual event has been taking place with the combined bands of Toronto (32 Canadian Brigade Group) for the past 22 years. There are a number of rehearsals that take place during the early fall culminating in a long day at RTH, the day of the concert. Again, it was well received and PM Lang was again the Sr Pipe Major for this event.

Immediately on the heels of this, we were playing at the Homecoming weekend events and the annual Remembrance Day Parade. We were fortunate to host the 48th Highlanders of Holland Pipes and Drums and joined forces with the Military Band and the St. Andrew's College Pipes and Drums to provide a unique drill and musical event for the Friday night Meet and Greet. From all accounts, it was an amazing experience for everyone involved.



Photo courtesy Pte S. Marjoram

On Remembrance Day Sunday, the 48th Highlanders of Holland were asked to parade the Old Comrades to the Monument and they happily agreed to the task. They even had a member on parade as part of the Old Comrades Colour Party.

Next, we began the rehearsal schedule for the St. Andrews' Ball that culminated with the annual event at the Royal York Hotel, in late November. The evening was a great success again, with the Pipes and



Photo courtesy Jim Leatch



DILEAS GU BRATH | (c) Ian L. Macdonald, Toronto

Drums performing a Beat Retreat at the end of the evening. It is a long night for some, as we are there to play for the dinner before the dancing portion begins at 10pm. Overall, attendance was down a little this year, but the officers' mess was extremely well represented this year and this did not go unnoticed by the members of the band.



Photo courtesy Frank Moir

For the Pipes and Drums, 2011 was an extremely busy year and 2012 looks to be the same. It will begin with three of our members deploying to the field with the unit, for an exercise with the Georgia National Guard's 2nd Foot. We also know that the Band will perform for five Burn's Dinners in January and the Canadian International Tattoo in Hamilton, in June. Other opportunities may see the band travel to the US, BC and possibly overseas. As always, it will be a fine ambassador for the Regiment.

DILEAS



A NEW MEMORIAL PLAQUE IN ROME HONOURS THE SERVICE OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 48TH HIGHLANDERS AS PART OF THE LIBERATION OF ITALY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

By HCol John Newman

The morning of 13 November, 2011 was bright and sunny in Rome, when a packed All Saints Anglican Church celebrated Remembrance Day and the Dedication of a new Memorial Plaque honouring the service and sacrifice of the soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 48th Highlanders of Canada as part of the liberation of Italy during World War Two.

Long-time Church Warden and resident of Rome, Sandra Seagram Annovazzi organized this solemn event. She is the only daughter of Captain Philip Seagram, who was the first of our Regimental Officers to die in World War Two, killed in a London air raid. At the time, he was serving as Aide de Camp to Canadian Army Commander General Andrew McNaughton and as Honourary Aide to King George VI.

The Memorial, the first one to recognize the Regiment in mainland Italy, was donated by Sandra Annovazzi, who also serves in the Italian Army Medical Corps, currently holding the rank of Lt, and by Honourary Colonel John Newman.

The Sermon, which was part of the Dedication Ceremony, was given by the Venerable Jonathan Boardman, who is responsible for the Church of England in Italy, Sicily and Malta.



The plaque reads:

"In memory of the Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the 48th Highlanders of Canada, 1st Brigade, 1st Canadian Division who served, and those who Fell, during the Liberation of Italy.

1943-1945

Dileas Gu Brath (Faithful Forever)"



ABOVE: Standing below the new Canadian Memorial (R to L): CF Col Donald Denne, HCol John Newman, Philip Annovazzi, Mrs Philip (Valerie) Annovazzi, Sandra Seagram Annovazzi, Eugenia Annovazzi, Piper Tony Randell, and Mrs Denne. **TOP RIGHT:** (L to R) HCol John Newman, Globe and Mail Editor Eric Reguly and British Ambassador to Rome Christopher Prentice discuss the July, 2013 Canadian commemorative ceremonies, which will honour the 70th anniversary of Operation Husky. **TO THE RIGHT:** Lt Daniel Rizzo, a colleague of Sandra Seagram Annovazzi and a fellow member of the Italian Army Medical Corps, stands at attention below the new Canadian Memorial.





TOP LEFT: KILLED BY A GERMAN BOMB which wrecked a London restaurant Saturday night, **Capt. Philip Seagram of Toronto is shown at CENTRE** in this picture, taken when he was aide-de-camp to **Lieut.-Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, commander of the Canadian Corps. Gen. McNaught is at RIGHT; at LEFT is Lieutenant Viscout, also an A.D.C.** Taken from a Toronto Newspaper. **ABOVE: The OCA wreath.**



A version of the sermon preached by the Venerable Jonathan Boardman at All Saints Anglican Church Rome on 13 November, 2011

Dileas Gu Brath - it may be the only phrase in Scot's Gaelic that you ever hear, and should you hear it again you almost certainly will hear it pronounced more accurately, but listen to it again as it has a long-lasting and powerful resonance - Dileas Gu Brath. Forever Faithful. This has been the motto of the 48th Highlanders of Canada since their foundation 120 years ago - it was just ten years old when Highlanders served in their first armed conflict, the Boer War, nearing a quarter century at the outbreak of the Great War, and just short of fifty with the coming of World War II. It remains the motto of reservists and peace keeping volunteers from the Highlanders to this date, 120 years on. But this longevity is put into perspective with the

eternity implied by the motto's meaning - this is not to be a faithfulness for just more than a century, but forever.

We all know, from even our haziest recollections of physics lessons, that time is relative. We know it's true when we take just a moment to consider that, for middle aged persons like me, the end of World War II was an event much nearer to our birth than is today. Twenty years before seemed like an aeon to a boy growing up in the mid-sixties, an era which is now itself fifty years ago.

And then again, popular culture has a way of surprising you, warping time as it were. In the seventies, the most popular historical soap opera was the story of an Edwardian great house and the parallel lives lived therein by its masters and servants. 'Upstairs Downstairs' used a series of real events, such as the sinking of the Titanic and the coming of World War I, as plot devices. Forty years on, the highly derivative TV show 'Downton Abbey' does the same. But does Downton get history right? I think not always. The shock expressed at the appearance of a gramophone, in 1919, by even as antediluvian a character as the dowager lady Grantham, played magnificently by Maggie Smith, is seriously misplaced, as the device was invented in 1878. Even such an old stuck in the mud surely would have come across one in forty years.

I was alerted to this anachronism by my own recollection of a much more historically accurate celluloid fiction, the 1943 film, 'The Life and death of Colonel Blimp'. Written, produced and directed by the extraordinary team of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger (collectively The Archers), this is the story of

one British Army officer, who serves in the Boer War, and the First and Second World conflicts. A featured Boer War gramophone was the element which gave Downton's shoddy game away. The film, however, has a much greater relevance to the theme of this address than its admirable historical accuracy.

In its historical course framed in a ground breaking narrative flashback we see the same passage trodden by the 48th Highlanders of Canada in the military career of the film's anti-hero General Clive Wynne-Candy. The film's extraordinary humanity, even during wartime, is famous, especially in its refusal to class all Germans as Nazis, and earned it considerable hostility from Churchill's administration. But most of all what the film teaches is that some things change, but others, especially values, stay the same. Faithful forever maintains its promise.

The true perspective in which to place human values and virtues, like those exhibited by the Highlanders in their first sixty years of courageous military engagement and their second of peace keeping endeavour, is the eternity known to us in God's promises. We understand what it might be to be faithful forever, because that is exactly how we experience God's love. All the relativity in the human experience of time is pulled into the solid truth and value of service, self-sacrifice and forgiveness found in God's loving heart made plain in the life of Jesus Christ. It is in the light of this that the Highlander's motto is made plain in whichever language it is pronounced. Forever Faithful - Dileas Gu Brath.



15TH BATTALION PROJECT UPDATE

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Pipes & Drums, Belgian Veterans Association, The Belgian Army, Site Director of Vimy Ridge National Historical Site, The Durand Group, St George's Memorial Church, The Last Post Association, Varlet Farm and numerous other friends, supporters and interested members of the local area communities. Immediately after the dedication, the City of Ieper hosted a reception at the Cloth Hall, which, in turn, was followed by an extended Last Post ceremony at The Menin Gate. The 15th Battalion Memorial Project Team and Canada were front and centre and, as at the previous year's ceremony, we gave the Exhortation and our party was first in order for laying of wreaths. Once again supporting us was the full complement of the Passchendaele 1917 Pipes & Drums.

The next morning we bid farewell to Varlet Farm and the Salient and crossed over into France for the dedication ceremony at Festubert, scheduled for that afternoon. On arrival, we were met by Simon Godly, who has been assisting the Project since 2009 and was instrumental in the success of the Festubert memorial, being directly involved with all administrative and logistical aspects as well as the essential ongoing coordination with The Project Team in Canada. Again, the weather was perfect and the participation, support and attendance by the local community and organizations was outstanding. Possessing the necessary linguistic skills, Simon functioned as the MC for the ceremony, which basically replicated the traditional service used in Belgium that previous day. He provided a historical overview of the May 1915 battle and the role of the 15th Battalion in the attack on the North Breastworks. This was followed by speeches by the Mayor of Festubert, M. Jean-Marie Douvry and Mr. Jean-Dominique Ieraci of The Canadian Embassy, the unveiling of the memorial, the prayer of consecration written by Regimental Padre Greg Bailey and read by Capt (ret) Stephan Tremblay, the laying of wreaths, the playing of "Pour La Morte" (French Last Post), Flowers of the Forest by a lone Passchendaele 1917 P & D piper and finally, the French and Canadian National anthems by a band of local musicians playing for the first time together. (and they did an excellent job!)

As at The Crow's Nest dedication, the year before, there was an impromptu fly-over by a French Air Force Mirage, from a nearby airbase. Again the ceremony was very well attended, not only in terms of officials and organizations - local, national and international - but also in terms of the local community, who were experiencing a



somewhat rare contact with Canadians.

Following the dedication we laid wreaths at the Town's war memorial and hosted a reception in the hall of the local school. The reception, organized completely by Simon Godly, was an outstanding success and provided an excellent opportunity for us to become acquainted with the local community and the network of organizations devoted to the preservation of the heritage of The Great War. Many new friendships and contacts were made and a footprint established –or should I say re-established since Highlanders were first there in 1915! Festubert should definitely be a place to visit for all Highlanders travelling in Northern France.

The balance of the trip was spent on Project research, a liaison courtesy call to The Crow's

Nest memorial and our project friends at The Chateau in Hendecourt, recess for the Phase Three memorials and the opportunity to take part in two rare events. Accompanied by Simon Godly, we conducted a confirmatory recce of the Hill 70 site and preliminary recces of sites for Canal du Nord in Marquion and the Somme at Courcellette. We were also invited by Laurel Clegg, the Casualty Identification Coordinator at DHH, to attend the funeral and reburial of Pte Alexander Johnson, a WWI Canadian soldier from the 78th Battalion. His remains were unearthed during construction near Cambrai in 2008 and were DNA matched to relatives living in Canada and Scotland. This was a very moving ceremony and it is covered in more detail in another article in this edition. Equally moving and more directly related to the 15th Battalion was our visit to the souterraine tunnels of Maison Blanche near Vimy at the invitation of The Durand Group. These tunnels, which are not accessible to the general public, contain many inscriptions and carvings left by the Canadians who occupied them in 1917 – including members of the 15th Battalion. Again this visit and Maison Blanche are covered in more detail in accompanying articles.

Building on the lessons learned and the success of the Phase One 2010 memorial dedications, the Phase Two dedications at Observatory Ridge and Festubert were a complete success, again accomplished on schedule and on budget. I would be entirely remiss if I did not here acknowledge the individuals whose participation and support were instrumental in our success; Mr John Cassie, Captain Stephan Tremblay (ret), Mrs Jean Miso, HonCol John Newman and HLCOL



(ret) Don Greer, whose generous donations provided the project funding; Mr Guy Gruewz in Belgium and Mr Simon Godly in France who were each directly responsible for facilitating and coordinating the respective Belgian and French memorials; the Mayor of Ieper, M. Luc Dahaene and the Mayor of Festubert, M. Jean-Marie Douvry, for their support; and last but not least to the members of the 15th Battalion Memorial Project Team for another year of long hours and hard, dedicated work.

PHOTOS, TOP LEFT: Menin Gate buglers at Observatory Ridge Memorials. LEFT CENTRE: Mayor of Ieper at Observatory Ridge Memorial. TOP CENTRE: Festubert Memorial. TOP RIGHT: 15th Battalion Project Team at Festubert memorial. ABOVE: Canadians with Mayor of Festubert. BELOW: 15th Bn Project Team at Vimy Memorial.



THAT WHICH WAS LOST, NOW IS FOUND 15th Battalion artifacts recovered in the Ypres salient

by Capt (ret) V Goldman and BGen (ret) G Young

On 22nd October, 2011, on wind swept Observatory Ridge, following the dedication of the 15th Battalion Memorial for the 1916 Battle of Mount Sorrel, an elderly gentleman approached the members of the Memorial Project Team and held out his hand indicating he wanted to show us something special. To our great surprise he was holding a 48th Highlanders cap badge. Unable to speak English, through an interpreter, he pointed to the north and told us that he lived in the last house at the bottom of the ridge just outside of the community of Zillebeke. He went on to tell us that in the 1960s, when digging holes to plant new trees, he and his father had found the badge.

On 2 June 1916 the area he indicated was known as Valley Cottages. It had been the 15th Battalion's assembly area where the unit came under very heavy artillery fire prior to starting up and onto Observatory Ridge itself in a counterattack to recapture 3rd Canadian Division positions lost to the Germans the previous day.

As this item was not a 15th Bn badge but a 48th cap badge, it likely belonged to an "original" member of the 1st Contingent, who had retained it out of Regimental pride. Holding the badge the imagination ran wild with possible scenarios regarding its' loss. If only the badge could speak, what a story it might tell of that day on Observatory Ridge in 1916.

The gentleman then promptly donated the badge to the 15th battalion exhibit, scheduled for the 1917 Passchendaele Museum, which brings us to an entirely different surprise. The day before while meeting with officials of the Passchendaele Museum to discuss this very 15th Battalion exhibit that will open in September 2012, we were shown one of their newest acquisitions. To our surprise, it was a 48th Highlander tenor drum. The drum had World War One battle honours emblazoned but South Africa was missing. This immediately dated the drum to the 1920 period, as the South Africa battle honour was not awarded to the unit until 1928. On either side of the area



TOP: Mr Henri Braem-Defever and BGen G. Young standing on the front line position on Observatory Ridge.

MIDDLE: Mr Henri Braem-Defever displaying 48th cap badge he found on his property near Observatory Ridge almost 50 years ago.

BOTTOM: Passchendaele Museum's newest acquisition a 48th Highlander's drum bearing names of WW1 Commanding Officers.

where the battle honours were displayed were the names of the Home Battalion and 15th Battalion Commanding Officers. Inside the skinless drum, written in pencil, was the text "refurbished 1950 - Lloyd Tucker" and below that "1980 - S. Liel".

These Regimental items once lost to the tides of war and time will now be displayed in the Ypres Salient at the Passchendaele 1917 Memorial Museum, located in Zonnebke, Belgium.



**SPEECH BY THE
BURGOMEESTER
OF IEPER
M. LUC DEHAENE
ON THE OCCASION
OF THE DEDICATION
OF THE
OBSERVATORY
RIDGE MEMORIAL
TO THE 15TH
BATTALION (48TH
HIGHLANDERS
OF CANADA)**

**Good afternoon to each of you
on this historic site!**

I have the honour to welcome Mrs Beatrice Maille who is here on behalf of the Embassy of Canada, the Defence Attaché of Canada Colonel Gervais, Honorary Colonel Newman representing the 48th Highlanders of Canada, Brigadier General Young and his team, standing for the Memorial Project - the people who took the initiative for the building of this memorial of which the plaque takes us back to the events of June 1916. A warm welcome as well to all the other dignitaries and people attending, each in their own function, rank or duty.

We accept with great gratitude this memorial plaque from The Regimental Family on behalf of the 15th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. We honour in this monument, the memory and the sacrifice of those Canadians involved in the terrible and fierce battles of early June 1916. 95 years ago, this peaceful place was not a place of peace at all. Here the war raged in great intensity. This was the place where valiant attempts were made to stop the then enemy. Here fell, together with the soldiers who gave their lives for freedom and democracy, also the peace. The war was not the continuation of politics with other means. War is suspending the politics by means of violence, as politics is per definition the rejection of violence to arrange affairs. In order to build together at the future, to shape a society, to realise a civilization, is it better to count heads rather than beating them in.



THE BATTLE OF MOUNT SORREL – ‘OBSERVATORY RIDGE’

15TH BATTALION (48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA)
3RD BRIGADE 1ST DIVISION CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

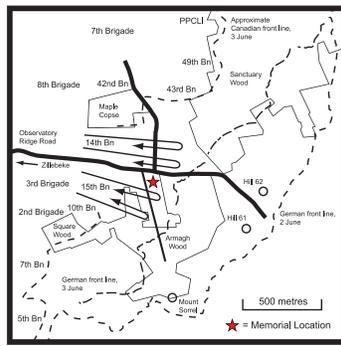
Throughout the First World War, the town of Ypres lay at the hub of a vital transportation network linking the front lines with ports on the English Channel. Hence, the Ypres Salient became a highly contested piece of ground on the Western Front defended tenaciously by Allied forces at a high cost in lives and materiel.

On June 2nd 1916, the Germans executed a powerful attack against key terrain features in the eastern part of the salient held by the 3rd Canadian Division: Hill 62, Observatory Ridge, Hills 60 and 61 and Mount Sorrel. A bombardment of unprecedented violence ravaged the Canadian trenches destroying entire companies. The German advance tore a 1200 metre gap in the Canadian line and captured all the vital ground from Sanctuary Wood to Mount Sorrel including Observatory Ridge. Since Observatory Ridge overlooked the entire Canadian line from Hooge to Hill 60, it had been the main German objective and so here would take place the fiercest fighting during the Battle of Mount Sorrel.

Senior British commanders determined immediate counterattacks were required to halt the German attack and restore the eastern apex of the Salient. Elements of the veteran 1st Canadian Division, including the 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders of Canada) launched a series of attacks between Sanctuary Wood and Mount Sorrel. As German artillery fire lit up the night sky during the night of 2-3 June, the 15th Battalion hurried forward from reserve positions at Ouderdom and reached an intermediate position near Zillebeke where it prepared for the next day's attack.

Confusion and traffic congestion behind the lines delayed the counterattack until after sunrise on June 3rd and the 15th Battalion began to suffer heavy

"The mad crescendo runs
On the woeful waiting ones
The huddled world in waiting
'Neath the Guns."



casualties on the reverse slope of Observatory Ridge even as it formed up for the attack. It became increasingly clear that any attempt to cross over Observatory Ridge would be disastrous under such heavy German fire. However, commanders decided to press forward, if only to keep the enemy off balance while additional reinforcements came forward from Ypres.

The 15th Battalion advanced up Observatory Ridge while the 14th Battalion (Royal Montreal Regiment) - on its immediate left flank across Observatory Ridge Road (Zandvoedstraat) - attacked towards Maple Copse. "Upon the signal being given the officers and men behaved most courageously, immediately getting out, forming line and rushing forward in the face of a perfect Hell of artillery and machine gun fire. It did not seem possible that anything could live through it." (15th Battalion War Diary).

The Canadian units were forced back and the 15th Battalion, despite reaching the top of Observatory Ridge, fell back below the crest of the ridge and dug in. The ground was covered with fallen Highlanders as 11 Officers and 279 other ranks were killed, wounded, or missing. However, they had advanced the line 300 metres and sealed the gap in the Canadian line between Maple Copse and Square Wood. Today, the Fallen lie in Klien-Vierstraat British, Lijssenthoek Military, Vlaemertinghe Military and Oosttaeverne Wood Cemeteries as well as Railway Dugouts Burial Ground and Zillebeke Churchyard. The Missing are memorialized on the Menin Gate in Ypres.

Although these initial counterattacks on June 3rd failed to recover significant ground, they did preoccupy German forces while more comprehensive countermeasures were planned, and secured forward assault positions for subsequent attacks. Ten days later - on June 13th - units of the 1st Canadian Division recaptured Mount Sorrel recovering much of the ground lost on June 2nd. Once again, the Canadians had helped to secure the Ypres Salient.

DILEAS GU BRATH
(Faithful Forever)

Politics failed in the agony of the Great War, but democracy would be born again, because the belief in the power of people and democracy seemed greater and will always be greater than the power of dictatorship and the repression. This is what we see today at other places in the world as well : finally the people rize, finally the resistance wins. If we commemorate the military who gave their lives in an attempt to save our freedom, then we remember them as a model : you should never stop the struggle for freedom and peace.

This commemoration on Observatory Ridge is not a tribute to war, it is a sign of gratitude. The men who gave their lives were no warlike fighters, they were warriors for freedom and peace. We remember those who lost their lives in a last attempt to save our freedom. The perpetuating of the remembrance of war makes us understand the co-existence is essential for the civilization, and that within the society, people, men and women, have right on respect for their identity. Respect is an essential value, having respect for others is a social duty, because our freedom is a duty.

We have the duty to keep the memory

alive. The constitutional values of our society look evident to us. But in the context of both world wars, we realize that freedom, peace, solidarity and democracy are not (always) acquired. Hence we feel ourselves obliged to be watchful so that the memory of the sacrifice in the past will never be forgotten.

We do not keep the memory of the valour alive to glorify the war. A war can never be considered as noble. Men fighting for democracy and freedom, for right and for justice, are noble men, but the war in which they fulfill their duty, is not noble at all. Not the praises of war we sing, we only sing the praises of the peace.

Particularly for this reason we remember those who fought for the preservation or the restauration of peace. We call them heroes. No heroes for violence, but heroes for peace. And because they were heroes for peace, freedom and democracy, we commemorate today those who gave their lives to keep hold of this area, in a last and heroic attempt to preserve our freedom.

With this and other memorials we are erecting in the Ypres Salient, the City of Ieper wants to report to the visitors of today and tomorrow these historical facts, before endeavours fade The horrible, cruel



'THE BATTLE OF FESTUBERT'

15TH BATTALION (48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA)
3RD BRIGADE 1ST DIVISION CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Following the chlorine gas attack and heavy defensive fighting in the Ypres Salient in April 1915, the depleted Battalions of the 1st Canadian Division were reinforced, pulled out of the line at Ypres, and on May 3rd moved to France south of Armentières. On May 9th, as part of the plan to support the French Tenth Army's offensive north of Arras at Neuville-St Vaast, Notre Dame de Lorette and Vimy Ridge, the British First Army launched an attack against German positions along Aubers Ridge. Although these costly attacks failed, the British command decided to resume the offensive near Festubert to prevent German reinforcements from moving south against the French at Vimy.

The Battle of Festubert opened on May 15th with British and Indian troops pushing the Germans back and making advances towards La Quinke Rue. On May 18th, the Canadian 3rd Brigade was called up from reserve and moved into the line east of Festubert joining a series of assaults around the Orchard, a German stronghold bordering the Rue de l'Étang. Despite heavy casualties, the 14th Battalion (Royal Montreal Regiment) pushed the line forward north of La Quinke Rue and the 16th Battalion (Canadian Scottish Regiment) fell short of the Orchard but captured part of the strong-point called the North Breastworks. On May 20th, the 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders of Canada) advanced from this area along the La Quinke Rue with orders to take two German strongholds, L.11 and L.12, on Rue d'Ouvert while the 16th Battalion renewed its attack on the Orchard.

As the 16th Battalion advanced under cover of an artillery barrage to successfully seize the Orchard, the 15th Battalion encountered heavy German artillery and machine gun fire in the open fields. Despite inadequate artillery support and the loss of their own machine guns, the Highlanders secured the remaining sections of the North Breastworks. The 15th Battalion's advance continued in leaps and bounds but it proved impossible to maintain direction, and barbed wire entanglements in front of the German line could not be penetrated. Despite a renewed attempt to push forward, there was no chance of reaching their objectives so the 15th Battalion fell back to the North Breastworks and held it against several determined German counterattacks.

After the capture of the Orchard and the North Breastworks, units of the 1st Canadian Division continued to press forward against heavy odds around Festubert for several more days but without making any significant gains. When the battle was called off on May 25th, the line established by the advances of the 15th and 16th Battalions remained the front line until 1918. The 1st Canadian Division suffered 2468 casualties and of those the 15th Battalion lost 150 men. The Fallen of the 15th Battalion lie buried in Aire Communal, Arras Road Roclincourt, Béthune Town, Cabaret-Rouge British, Etaples, Guards (Cunichy), Hinges Military, Le Touquet and Pont-du-Hem Cemeteries. The Missing are commemorated on the Vimy Memorial.

DILEAS GU BRATH
(Faithful Forever)

LA BATAILLE DE FESTUBERT

15e BATAILLON (48th HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA)
3e BRIGADE 1re DIVISION CORPS EXPÉDITIONNAIRE CANADIEN

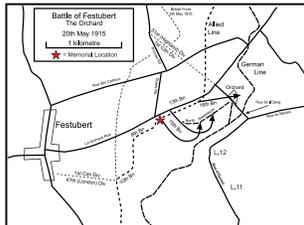
À la suite de l'attaque au gaz de chlore et des combats sanglants dans le saillant d'Ypres en avril 1915, les bataillons épuisés de la 1re division canadienne reçurent des renforts et sortirent de la ligne du front d'Ypres. Le 3 mai elles se portèrent vers la France et le front au sud d'Armentières. Le 9 mai, dans le cadre du plan de soutien à l'offensive de la Xe armée française sur Neuville-St Vaast, Notre Dame de Lorette et la crête de Vimy, la 1re armée britannique lança une attaque sur les positions allemandes le long de la crête d'Aubers. Bien que ces attaques coûteuses échouèrent, le commandement britannique relança l'attaque du côté de Festubert afin d'empêcher les allemands de déployer des renforts contre les Français à Vimy.

La bataille de Festubert débuta le 15 mai. Les troupes britanniques et indiennes firent reculer les Allemands et progressèrent en direction de La Quinke Rue. Le 18 mai, la 3e brigade canadienne, fut appelée de la réserve et placée sur le front à l'Est de Festubert. Elle participa à une série d'attaques aux environs du verger, une fortification allemande en bordure de la rue de l'Étang. Le 14e bataillon (Royal Montreal Regiment) avança la ligne de front au nord de La Quinke Rue mais subit de lourdes pertes, tandis que le 16e bataillon (Canadian Scottish Regiment) n'arriva pas à progresser jusqu'au verger, mais réussit à capturer une partie de la position forte appelée le North Breastwork (le parapet nord). Le 20 mai le 15e bataillon (48th Highlanders of Canada) avança de cet endroit longeant La Quinke Rue avec ordre de prendre deux bastions allemands appelés: L.11 et L.12, dans la rue d'Ouvert, tandis que le 16e bataillon renouvelait son attaque sur le verger.

Pendant que le 16e bataillon, sous le couvert d'un barrage d'artillerie, réussit à s'emparer du verger, le 15e bataillon rencontra de lourds tirs d'artillerie allemands et des mitrailleuses cachées dans les champs. Malgré un soutien d'artillerie insuffisant et la perte de leurs propres mitrailleuses, les Highlanders s'emparèrent du reste du North Breastwork. Le 15e bataillon continua son avance à pas de géant, mais il s'avéra impossible de maintenir le cap ou pénétrer le réseau de fils de fers barbelés devant la ligne allemande. Malgré une nouvelle tentative pour avancer, c'était évident qu'il n'y avait aucune possibilité d'atteindre leurs objectifs de sorte que le 15e bataillon dut se replier sur sa nouvelle position au North Breastwork où il tint bon contre de plusieurs lourdes contre-attaques allemandes.

Après la capture du verger et le North Breastwork, les unités de la 1re division canadienne continuèrent à avancer du côté de Festubert contre vents et marées pendant plusieurs jours mais sans faire des gains importants. Quand la bataille prit fin le 25 mai, la ligne établie par les progrès des 15e et 16e bataillons restèrent comme ligne de front jusqu'en 1918. La 1re division canadienne subit 2468 victimes, morts et blessés parmi eux 150 hommes du 15e bataillon. Les morts du 15e bataillon sont enterrés dans les cimetières: communal d'Aire; Arras Road à Roclincourt; Béthune; Cabaret-Rouge à Souchez; Étaples, Guards à Cunichy, Hinges, Le Touquet et au Pont du Hem. Les disparus sont commémorés sur le Monument commémoratif du Canada à Vimy.

DILEAS GU BRATH
(Fidèle pour toujours)



TOP: Festubert 1915.
MIDDLE: Armagh Wood 1916.
BOTTOM: Observatory Ridge 1916.

destiny of the thousands who did not want and did not ask for the war, cannot leave us serene. May this monument, as people pass it by, cause reflection. Those young people never returned home. Fathers and mothers were mourning for their sons; they are buried in a strange land, here, in Flanders, at Ieper. These former battlefields are crying for peace.

I'm sure you will all agree with me that we can now proceed to the unveiling and the dedication of this new memorial plaque dedicated to the heroic efforts of the 15th Canadian Battalion.

THANK YOU.



ABOVE: Burgomeester M. Luc Dehaene lays flowers on behalf of the City of Ieper.

Minister of Veterans Affairs
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0P4

OCT 12 2011

Brigadier-General Gregory Young, OMM, CD (Retired)
Chairman, 15th Battalion Memorial Project
1020 Old Derry Road
Mississauga, Ontario
L5W 1A1

Dear General/ Dear General Young,

Thank you for your kind invitation to attend the unveiling and dedication of two memorials to the 15th Battalion C.E.F. on October 22 and 23, 2011.

I would first like to commend you and all the volunteers on the project team for your dedicated efforts in ensuring that the soldiers who served in the 15th Battalion during the Great War are appropriately honoured. I also wish to recognize the City of Ieper and the Town of Festubert for their contributions to the creation of these memorials.

Regrettably, I will not be able to join you for the dedication ceremonies; however, I am pleased to inform you that Colonel Richard Gervais, Canadian Defence Attaché from the Canadian Embassy in France, will be attending on behalf of the Government of Canada.

Please accept my best wishes for a most memorable event.

Sincerely,

Steven Blaney, P.C., M.P.

Proposed!
What is just project and is just project especially at the eve of the 100th of The Great War!!

Private Memorials Honour Sacrifice of WWI Unit

By Richard Foot
Ypres, Belgium — Courtesy Toronto Star

The Belgian countryside surrounding this ancient city seems impossibly peaceful now, compared to the violence and gunfire that gripped it nearly a century ago.

At Observatory Ridge, a green hillside just outside town --- once covered with muddy shell craters and long lines of blood-stained Canadian soldiers --- there are now only well-tended farmhouses and flocks of sheep grazing quietly on the sun-dappled slopes.

The only reminder of the carnage that occurred here during the Battle of Mount Sorrel in 1916, is a modest, brick memorial, erected last month by a group of retired Toronto soldiers determined to honour the sacrifices of one particular unit of Canada's First World War army.

For three years, former members of the 48th Highlanders of Canada --- one of Toronto's army reserve regiments --- have been raising money, researching the history books, and negotiating with French and Belgian landowners to build permanent memorials on the exact locations where a previous generation of 48th Highlanders fought and died in the First World War.

Their project is designed to remember not only the regiment itself but the wider 15th Battalion, one of several Canadian Great War battalions, which the 48th Highlanders raised in Toronto at the start of the conflict, but which was later augmented by replacement troops from across the country.

Canada has built magnificent national monuments in France and Belgium to commemorate its war dead, including the towering white memorial at Vimy Ridge. But almost nowhere in Europe do individual units have private monuments to their own specific memory.

"Right down at the level of a battalion or a unit, there are virtually no Canadian memorials on the Western Front," says Brigadier-General Greg Young, a retired Toronto reservist, who is leading the 15th Battalion Memorial Project, and who unveiled the Mount Sorrel memorial on Oct. 22.

"Some other individual units have their own plaques in churches here and there, but there is nothing right out in the battlefields."

Young, a former Toronto high school history teacher, says there's nothing wrong with Canada's national monuments, but with the 100th anniversary of the war approaching, he and his colleagues wanted to do more to preserve the 15th Battalion's individual wartime memory.

"It wasn't that we felt our regiment's history had been forgotten over here, it's just that we wanted to personalize it a little more."

Since 2008 Young and his project team have raised more than \$50,000 in private funds to build five simple memorials in France and Belgium --- where the battalion played important roles on the battlefield. Three memorials were unveiled in 2010 and two, including the one at Mount Sorrel, were dedicated last October.

The dedication ceremonies are simple, grassroots affairs attended by Young and a handful of other retired Toronto officers, as well as large turnouts of local residents --- still keenly aware of the Allied role in driving German forces out of their villages a century ago.

"I'm here to pay my respects to the Canadians, and to remember," said Henri Quanerst, a Frenchman who attended the unveiling of the 15th Battalion memorial in Festubert, France last month.



Quanerst wasn't alive during the First World War, but he remembers, as a child, the shooting of two of his family members by the Nazis in 1940, and the subsequent liberation of his village by the British.

"There's a culture of awareness in this part of Europe about the history of both wars, and a common belief in remembrance," says Young. "Commemoration and remembrance is literally second nature to people here."

That awareness helped the project team find willing partners in France and Belgium, including municipal officials and private farmers, all eager to donate land and help navigate the bureaucratic complexities of putting up memorials on foreign soil.

"We thought acquiring the land would be the most difficult part of the whole enterprise, but it's turned out to be the easiest part," says Young, who despite having served in senior command roles in both Canada and Afghanistan, had no experience leading a project like this.

Raising money has been a tougher issue, but the project has so far been fueled by donations large and small from the 48th Highlander regimental family, and its connections in Toronto's business community, including those of its Honourary Colonel John Newman, a long time investment banker.

Brig-Gen [ret'd] Young says the group has scouted out three more sites for additional memorials to be built next year, if more money can be found.

He and his team --- which includes retired army Captains Vic Goldman, Steve Gilbert and Stephan Tremblay --- are also using their visits to Flanders to locate and photograph the gravestones of the roughly 1,700 Great War soldiers who died fighting with the 15th Battalion.

Photographs of each grave stone, scattered among hundreds of war cemeteries throughout the region, are then uploaded onto each soldier's online file, on the Virtual War Memorial website run by Veterans Affairs Canada.

Young once knew several former 15th Battalion members who fought from 1914-1918, but they, like all Canadian veterans of the First World War are now gone.

He says keeping their memory alive --- and also remembering the sacrifice of the 60,000 Canadians who never returned from the battlefields --- will require more effort with every passing year, as the war now passes, as he puts it, "from memory into history."



Editor's note: The article below is an English version of what appeared in the French newspaper 'Voix du Nord' a few days after the dedication of the new Memorial honouring the 15th Battalion's part in the Battle of Festubert.

Translation courtesy of Katherine J. Henderson.

AN INAUGURAL PLAQUE IN RUE DE LILLE TO COMMEMORATE THE BATTLE OF MAY 1915

Saturday, October 29, 2011



The French and Canadian members gather to mount the plaque

From May 15 to May 25 1915, the battle raged in Festubert....

The Canadian 48th Highlanders 15th and 16th battalions were at the heart of the battle. 96 years later, a monument reminds us of the conflict and the sacrifice of thousands of young Canadian volunteers, only 17 and 18 years of age.

In 2007 and at the time of retirement, 2 senior officers from the celebrated Canadian 48th Highlanders visited the battlefields where the regiment distinguished itself during the First World War. This visit took them from Ypres, Gravenstafel, Saint-Julien, Mont-Sorrel, Festubert and the Somme. All of these places are inscribed on the regiment flag in gold letters. More monuments are to be created to commemorate the feats of the Highlanders. The objective of the retired soldiers of the regiment is to set up a monument at each site. Seven are already in place and following Ypres as of Sunday, Festubert now displays a commemorative plaque on the battlefield.

At the end of the village, along rue de Lille, the municipality has given the Canadian battalion land where a plaque recounts the chronology of events 96 years ago. The inauguration took place Sunday in the presence of the Canadian authorities with the retired Canadian regiment on one side, the Municipality of Festubert centre and sections of local veterans on the other side.

The battle of Festubert took place from May 15th to May 25th. The Canadian forces who were called in by the British army, arrived in Festubert May 19th and took to battle May 20th. After initial success, the battle ended May 25th due to lack of ammunition. The onslaught of the British and the Canadians forces led to progress of approximately 500 meters on a front of 6 kilometres at the price of 16,648 dead on the allied side and 5,000 dead on the German side. The Canadian forces had almost no time to prepare for the operation and the Germans had full advantage of the field including fire-power and the ability to observe the allied preparation from far away. The Canadian troops gained little ground, on average 500 meters and underwent of terrible losses, 700 to 800 died on 2500 losses. With the battle of Ypres less than a month earlier, the Canadian division had suffered 8500 losses.



MEMORIAL PROJECT



15TH BATTALION C.E.F.

From the Royal Canadian Legion:

NEW MEMORIALS IN BELGIUM AND FRANCE

Published on October 22, 2011

Today and tomorrow (Oct. 22 and 23) memorials will be unveiled in Belgium and France commemorating participation of the 15th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in two First World War battles.

Today in Ieper (perhaps better recognized as Ypres), Belgium, the city and the 15th Battalion Memorial Project (48th Highlanders of Canada) will unveil and dedicate a memorial to commemorate the Canadian contribution to the counter-attack on Observatory Ridge in June 1915 during the battle for Mount Sorrel. The Canadians had more than 8,000 casualties in the two-week Battle of Mount Sorrel.

A similar ceremony takes place Sunday in Festubert, France, in commemoration of the battle fought there in May 1915.

The 15th Battalion Memorial Project plans to place a series of memorials in locations where the battalion won a number of its 21 battle honours for actions during the First World War. Memorials have already been dedicated at Gravenstafel Ridge and St. Julien near Ypres and in France at Hendecourt les Cagnicourt.



Canadians salute Last Post at Festubert dedication



THE DURAND GROUP - INVESTIGATION OF MAISON BLANCHE SOUTERRAINE

by LCOL (ret) Phillip Robinson RE

The Durand Group has its' origins with investigations of the Grange subway and connected La Folie system tunnels at the Vimy Memorial Site by Royal Engineer Teams in the late 1980s. These established that there was one primed mine charge with 6,000 lb of explosive (the Durand Mine) situated 70 ft below the surface close to the Grange subway, and another small camouflet charge in the tunnels under the forest area. Archival research also indicated the possibility of an abandoned 20,000 lb charge under the busy road junction at the Broadmarsh crater.

The potential hazard presented by these mines concerned Veterans Affairs Canada. In 1996, with the approach of the 80th anniversary commemorations at Vimy, Lt Col Phillip Robinson (by then retired), who had conducted the earlier investigations, was asked to access and check the situation with the 'Broadmarsh mine'. A small team of specialists in various disciplines was assembled and gained access. They found that although a substantial quantity of explosive (ammonal) remained, the initiation system had been removed and there was no danger of an induced explosion.

Arising from this, Lt Col Mike Watkins, MBE, of the Royal Logistic Corps, and a leading international expert in explosives, proposed the forming of a specialist Group to conduct further investigations of Great War Tunnels and Mines. Soon afterwards Mike Watkins removed the sensitive detonators and primers from the Durand mine, rendering it safe. Consequent on this the title Durand Group was adopted by the then members. It is defined in its Constitution as "a fraternal association of individuals who have voluntarily undertaken to work together to further research and investigation into military related subterranean features".

In support of Veterans Affairs Canada, the Group continued with investigations of the many kilometres of tunnels beneath the Vimy site but received a tragic setback in August 1998 when Mike Watkins was killed by a collapse of clay whilst in the process of accessing another tunnel system at Vimy. He is commemorated by the exceptional tribute of a bronze plaque erected by Veterans Affairs close to the entrance to the Grange subway.

The then members of the Group decided that continuing the works undertaken with Mike was the best manner in which his vision could

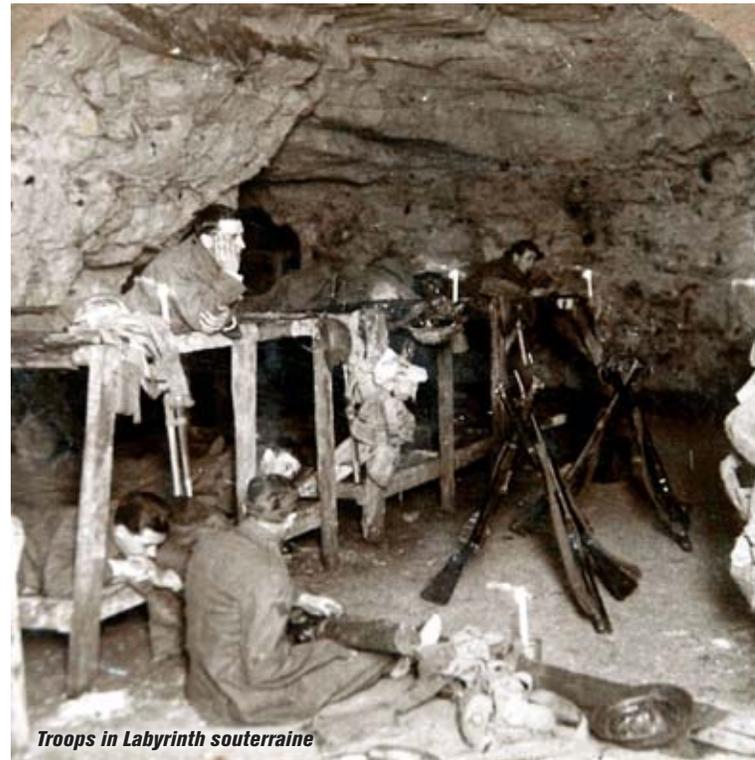
be realised. Since then the Group have accessed around six kilometres of British and German tunnels at Vimy and disarmed two further live mine charges, engaged with the Arras municipality in investigations of the Ronville tunnel system, and undertaken works in a number of other places, including on the Somme. One of the more notable achievements was gaining access, through clearance of an eight metre deep shaft, of the Goodman subway at Vimy and opening up about 600 metres. Untouched since the battlefield clearances of the 1920s this incorporated a rich harvest of graffiti left (mostly) by the troops of 7 (Canadian) Infantry Brigade in early April 1917.

The work on the Goodman subway led to approaches from a Canadian film company for a film, preceding the 90th anniversary at Vimy, which in turn indirectly led the Durand Group to the Maison Blanche souterraine.

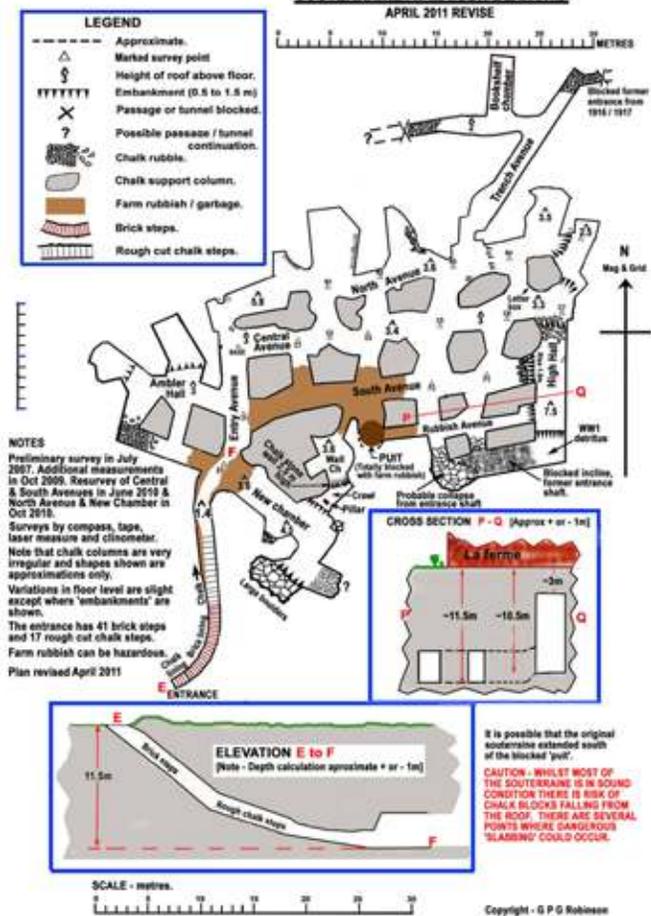
THE SOUTERRAINES

The chalk areas of northern France contain numerous underground quarries (carrieres) from which, since Roman times, stone has been extracted for buildings. At depths of between ten and twenty metres firm chalk can be 'slabbed' away and easily cut into suitably sized blocks. On exposure to air these harden into a soft limestone. Away from the former battle areas, where reconstruction was done with brick, the visitor to northern France can readily observe that many churches and the older buildings are made from chalk. It is self evident that, close to the front lines, these souterraines offered potential as extended dugouts or concealed and secure barracks for troops, headquarters locations and storage accommodation. The engineers on both sides sought them out.

In the plain immediately west of Vimy Ridge



Troops in Labyrinth souterraine



and south of Notre Dame de Lorette there are at least eight souterraines that were brought into use during the Great War. Several were initially occupied by the Germans and were the scene of



BGen Young examines bayonet in Maison Blanche

bitter fighting in the 1915 Battles of the Artois as the French drove the Germans back onto the heights of Vimy Ridge. In Neuville St Vaast it is said that the souterraines were interconnected and in turn linked to the cellars of houses in the village. A French officer described the fighting in the Au Rietz cave at La Targette, later occupied by the headquarters of the 2nd Canadian Division, the 5th (British) Division artillery, and the First Army heavy artillery :

The passages in which we were advancing were eighteen feet deep, and often twenty four feet or more. The water was sweating through in all directions and the sickly smell was intolerable. Imagine, too, that for three weeks we were not able to get rid of the dead bodies, amongst which we used to live night and day! One burrow, 120 feet long, took us thirteen days of ceaseless fighting to conquer entirely. The Germans had placed barricades, trapdoors and traps of all descriptions. When we stumbled we risked being impaled on bayonets treacherously hidden in holes lightly covered with earth. And all this went on in complete darkness. We had to use pocket lamps and advance with the utmost caution.

THE MAISON BLANCHE SOUTERRAINE

The Maison Blanche souterraine is located about one kilometre south of the above mentioned Au Rietz. The origins are uncertain. Comparatively modest in size it was clearly used to quarry chalk and at a guess may have been initially developed in the late 18th century. An inscription, one particular carving and a drawing on the walls, indicate that it was probably in use around 1861. At that time there was one entrance stairway and a puit (shaft for hauling stone). It

may be supposed that it fell into disuse in the later half of the 19th century.

It is assumed that in 1914 and 1915 the entrance was blocked or concealed. Despite the 1915 battles over the area (known subsequently as the 'Labyrinth' because of the maze of trenches) there is no evidence that it was utilised by either the Germans or the French. All the indications is that it was first brought into military use after the Canadian Corps deployed to the area and developed as an underground barracks behind the reserve line.

As is evidenced by the graffiti, it was accessible to the general public pre WW2 and in May 1940 it sheltered Belgian refugees. Aside from the scribbled graffiti by the visitors and the 1940 refugees, the cave is remarkable for the detailed carvings made by the Canadian occupants in early 1917. One such sculptor of extraordinary skill was Private A J Ambler, who (it is understood) had been a stone carver before enlisting. Intermingled with the carvings, drawings and poignant inscriptions, there is a letterbox sculpted out of the chalk and inscribed with the names of Privates W P Beckett and T Mason of 2nd Company the 48th Highlanders (of Canada). Were they perhaps responsible for the company post? In any event, they both survived the war although they were wounded in the battle for the Ridge.

It was unfortunate that post 1945 the landowner utilised the souterraine for dumping farm rubbish, completely filling the puit and almost blocking the brick clad entrance. However in 2001, M. Dominique Faivre, an intrepid member of the Association de Recherches Historique et Archéologiques Militaires (ARHAM), succeeded in wriggling over the rubbish down the entrance stairway and produced a report to the Director at Vimy, drawing attention to the carvings and graffiti within. In July 2006, a Judy Ruzyllo, then employed on research for YAP films, learnt of M. Faivre's investigation and (in her own words) 'sleuthed' the location and ownership of the souterraine. She negotiated an agreement with the proprietors to access it for filming purposes. In October 2006, to facilitate filming by YAP for a documentary (Heaven to Hell or The 3D War) , which partly addressed the tunnelling activities at Vimy, members of the Durand Group cleared sufficient of the entrance incline to allow access.

The Durand Group judged that the quality and extent of the primarily Canadian carvings and graffiti within the souterraine, merited protection and detailed recording. They accordingly formalised a protocol with the proprietors. Subsequently they fully cleared and renovated the entrance incline, fitted a steel hatch, improved the access, installed electric light strings, a field telephone connection, fully surveyed the system

and have recorded more than a thousand items of graffiti and carvings, work that remains to be completed. It is of note that in conjunction with another film company, Alex Ambler, the son of Private A J Ambler, was introduced to the work of his father, along with other family members. The Ambler family came on a private visit the following year although sadly Alex was too ill to participate and died shortly afterwards at the age of 93.

In the course of this the Durand Group have been providing support to a Canadian syndicate (CANADIGM) who, under the direction of Zenon Andrusyszyn, are engaged in mapping the graffiti and laser scanning the carvings in 3D with the intention of replicating for display across Canada and ultimate lodgement with relevant regimental museums. So far as the archives permit, the story of the soldiers who left their names in the chalk will also be told, and research into the names collected is being processed by volunteers and by the 15th Battalion Memorial Team.

The agreement with the proprietors limits visitor access to small and suitably equipped parties accompanied by members of the Durand Group who are familiar with the souterraine. This constrains visits to periods when member are present in France and available. Furthermore, although the souterraine is in reasonably sound condition, there is no guarantee that a slab of chalk won't suddenly fall and all visitors are required to sign a liability disclaimer.

The Durand Group are presently negotiating with the local authorities in Neuville St Vaast and Thelus for authority to excavate for the Zivy subway. Likewise, with the approval of the landowner, they intend excavations of two subsidences that might lead into the Tottenham subway and the three souterraines employed off that by the Canadian Corps. There are though no certainties. For a start, as a voluntary organisation the Group are dependant on donations to fund their operations. Even granted funding, all such excavations are by their nature hazardous, which is one reason why the Durand Group are exceptionally particular about granting membership to other than individuals who have served a long 'apprenticeship' and demonstrated their understanding, reliability and capabilities and undertaken training in a variety of disciplines. Even where a tunnel is breached, as happened recently near Loos, the geology may be such that total collapse denies further progress. It remains the hope that further work in 2012, subject to funding, will nevertheless reveal much more graffiti connecting the Canadian soldiers of the time to their descendants.



THE BURIAL OF PRIVATE ALEXANDER JOHNSTON

By Richard Foot — courtesy Postmedia News
Sailly-lez-Cambrai, France

Editor's note: During their October, 2011 trip to dedicate our newest memorials, the 15th Battalion Memorial Project Team was invited to attend the reburial of a WWI soldier whose remains had been recovered, and DNA identified, by the Forensic Identification Section of the Department of Military History and Heritage. The following article was written by journalist Richard Foot, who accompanied the Project Team during the trip.

Lost for 93 years amid the muddy fields of France and the mists of history, a Canadian soldier received a final, proper burial on Tuesday, and the thanks of a grateful nation.

Private Alexander Johnston, a 32-year-old conscript from Hamilton, Ont., went missing on the battlefield here nearly a century ago and was presumed dead, one of more than 11,000 Canadian casualties from the First World War with no known grave.

On Tuesday he was honoured at a poignant funeral, attended by Canadian and Scottish relatives who had not known Johnston --- or each other --- but whose families have now been reunited by the discovery of a common ancestor.

In 2008, as so often happens in northern France, the bones of soldier were dug from the ground during the construction of a new building development outside the city of Cambrai. Among the remains were the collar badges of the Canadian 78th Battalion, whose soldiers fought in the area in 1918.

So began three years of detective work by the Department of National Defence --- including an archival records search, genealogical sleuthing and DNA sampling from a set of teeth in one of the jaw bones.

Finally last spring, forensic investigator Laura Clegg identified the body as Johnston's.

A DNA match showed that his closest surviving relative was Don Gregory, a retired air force fighter pilot originally from Hamilton but now living in Ottawa.

Gregory, 78, had heard about Johnston from a great-aunt who was Johnston's sister. Gregory had also been entrusted with Johnston's birth certificate, to keep as a family memento, when his own mother died.

But Gregory and his Canadian relatives knew little of the Scottish family Johnston left behind when he immigrated to Ontario in 1912.

Johnston worked as a boilermaker in Hamilton for several years before being conscripted into the war and assigned to the 78th Battalion, also known as the Winnipeg Grenadiers.

He arrived at the Western Front in 1918, during the ferocious, final



phases of the war, when the Canadian Corps was pushing German forces out of France into Belgium. Only a month after joining the Battle of Canal du Nord, Johnston was reported missing. It's not even clear what day he actually died.

On Tuesday Johnston was honoured at a funeral fit for a warrior. Under cold, rainy skies typical of those that made life miserable for troops on the Western Front, his flag-covered casket was carried through an honour guard into a church in the small village of Sailly-lez-Cambrai.

There, in the presence of French dignitaries and the Canadian ambassador from Paris --- plus dozens of local residents who came to pay their respects to a distant liberator --- Johnston was eulogized by a military chaplain as "an incredibly stubborn man."

"Maybe because he's a Scotsman, or maybe because he's a soldier who never gives up, he refused to be away from his family forever," said Captain Charles Deogratias. "He has now come back."

Don Gregory and his adult children, David and Ann --- a trumpet player with the Governor General's Foot

Guards --- were introduced to their Scottish relatives by the genealogist who tracked down the family in both countries.

The funeral prompted Gregory to make his first visit to his Scottish cousins, whom he then accompanied to the funeral in France.

"It's an emotional day," Gregory said, "not only because of my great-uncle, but because finding him has brought us all together. The genealogist found us and got us together, and it's been just great."

"We've rejoined two sections of the Johnston clan, if you will."

Later, Johnston's casket was buried among old comrades at Cantimpre Cemetery, a small, Canadian military cemetery on one of the very roads where Allied armies pursued the Germans out of France.

Where once there were miles of mud and shell craters and death, there are now quiet farm fields, and the peaceful, well-tended cemetery shadowed by yew trees, where

Ann Gregory played the Last Post Tuesday on her trumpet.

There are more than 28,000 missing Canadian soldiers from both the First and Second World Wars, some whose remains lie in graves with unmarked headstones, and others who have no formal grave at all.

Private Johnston's case is only one small success story in an enduring wartime mystery, but forensic investigator Laura Clegg says it means more than that.

"There's still so many missing," she says, "that being able to do something for even one individual soldier is in some way representative of how Canada still cares for and remembers all of them."

"How we treat our war dead is extremely reflective of our society. Giving them the dignity of a name and a burial is the least we can do to repay the huge debt we owe them all."



BENEATH THE GROUND, NEAR VIMY

By Richard Foot – Arras, France
courtesy Postmedia News

Editor's note: The Project Team was invited by The Durand Group to tour a tunnel complex near Vimy Ridge called Maison Blanche, which is not accessible to the general public. The tunnels contain numerous carvings and inscriptions left by Canadians, especially by members of the 15th Battalion. Richard Foot accompanied the Project Team into this souterrain and authored the following article.

Private Alfred McMillan died in August 1917, several months after the battle of Vimy Ridge. His remains were never found, so his name is now inscribed in the marble walls of the soaring Vimy memorial, along with 11,000 other Canadian soldiers of the First World War with no known grave.

Five months before he was killed, however, Pte. McMillan, an infantryman from Collingwood, Ontario, carved his own name into another wall --- an underground cavern in northern France, where he and hundreds of troops sheltered from mud and rain and shellfire in the winter before the famous Vimy offensive.

"Pte. A. McMillan. 15th Canadian Battalion . . . 12.3.17," says the inscription that even includes McMillan's service number: "27931."

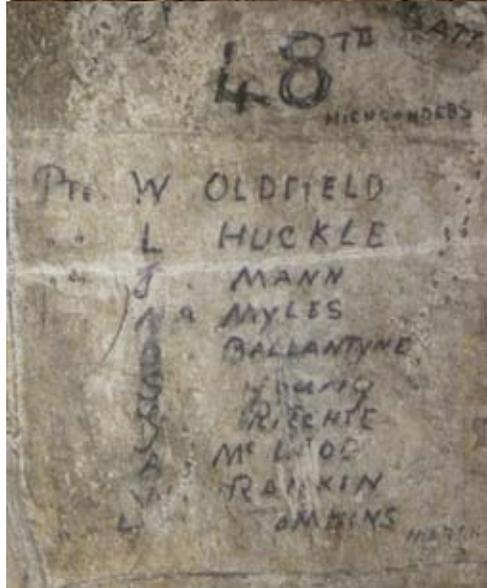
The carving is one of dozens left behind by Canadian troops in the dark cavern --- or souterraine, as the French call it --- a former underground barracks once bustling with soldiers, now lined with their words and chisellings, a rich repository of wartime memory that remains hidden, unheralded and largely unprotected by any official authority.

Northern France is filled with souterraines, many believed to have been dug in medieval times when people quarried slabs of chalk as building material for homes and churches. Some were later used as hiding places for refugees fleeing the violence of the French Revolution and other periods of upheaval.

In the First World War, both Allied and German armies took shelter in the souterraines, as an escape from the hardships of the trenches.

The "Canadian" cave complex was discovered in 2001 by a French archaeologist, and has since been explored and researched by members of The Durand Group, a private British organization dedicated to the preservation of tunnels and underground workings on the Western Front.

The cave lies beneath private farmland just south of the Vimy memorial. No



ABOVE LEFT: A 48th carving in Maison Blanche.
ABOVE: Within Maison Blanche.
LEFT: 15th BN names from March 1917.

supported by jagged stone columns.

There, amid the darkness, lies the detritus of a distant war --- piles of military mess tins, a rusted out bayonet, and handfuls of rifle bullets strewn about the floor.

Everywhere, the grey-white walls are adorned with the graffiti and carvings of soldiers either killing time, or leaving permanent, poignant reminders of their wartime service, before being sent into battle.

There's a life-sized face carved into one wall, a series of maple leaves and a heart carved into another. And in one hallway there's even a "letter box" --- surely a tongue-in-cheek gesture --- for mail bound from France to "Toronto, Canada."

There are also elaborately-carved regimental banners: the "Canadian Scottish," the "15th Battalion," the "48th Highlanders" and others.

Elsewhere soldiers simply scratched their names, or the names of their wives, mothers or girlfriends.

"It's a unique record of Canada's military history," says Phillip Robinson, a member of The Durand Group and a frequent visitor to the cave. "You're looking at men of the time, expressing their feelings and leaving their names for the future."

Robinson and his colleagues have so far documented more than 800 pieces of Canadian carvings or inscriptions in the cave.

"Today it's very hard to conceive of the conditions at the time and the hardships these men were under," he says. "As such, I feel it's

signs indicate its small, innocuous entranceway, or point to the historic treasures below. Visitors escorted there by Durand Group members are told to keep its exact location a secret, so that the farmer who owns the place isn't deluged with curious sightseers.

In the decades after the war, the farmer and his family dumped garbage and agricultural waste into the mouth of the cavern, filling the entrance and at least one large hallway with rubbish, farm chemicals and veterinarian needles.

Although piles of garbage still remain, enough has now been cleared away by The Durand Group that visitors wearing hard hats and carrying flashlights can climb down 12 meters underground, along rough-cut chalk steps, into a subterranean labyrinth of chalk corridors and high, spacious chambers, all

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

a particularly important historical contribution. What else is there where men of the time --- many of whom were later killed or wounded --- left their mark in this particular way?"

Robinson doesn't know what the cave's future might be. He would like the Canadian government to somehow ensure its preservation, but doing so --- and making the site safe and accessible for the public --- would require large investments of money and labour.

The carvings and inscriptions are, however, being documented by Canadigm, the Canadian Historical Documentation and Imaging Group, a grassroots association of historians and artists led by London, Ont. visual artist Zenon Andrusyszyn.

Andrusyszyn met Phillip Robinson several years ago, learned about the cavern, and decided that the soldiers and their carvings --- or artworks as he describes them --- deserved to be maintained for posterity.

For the past year Canadigm has been exploring the cave and recording its treasures. The group plans to return next year with a laser scanner to take 3-D images of the carvings and replicate them back in Canada.

Andrusyszyn says making plaster casts of the carvings might be easier, but "you don't do that to museum-quality artifacts," he says.

"Chalk is really soft, you can scratch it with your fingernails, and you run the risk of peeling something off the wall, or ruining the piece."

Instead Andrusyszyn will use laser imaging to make computer-carved, three-dimensional copies of the original artworks. He hopes to put the copies --- along with stories of the soldiers who left their names on the cavern's walls --- into a traveling art exhibit that would cross Canada in 2014, the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the war.

About all that stands in his way, he says, is continued funding for the project.

"The Vimy memorial is a public site. Everyone knows about it, and anyone can go there. But this souterraine is a private site," says Andrusyszyn. "Not that many people are going to be able to go down there. It's very limited. And I think these names and carvings really need to be brought up to the surface for people to see."

What can't be replicated in any exhibit is the haunting, emotional aura of the place --- the sense that soldiers' ghosts still inhabit its dark halls, calling out to visitors not to forget them.

"Some of these guys," says Andrusyszyn, "they wrote their names down and a few days or weeks later they were gone. They went over the top, they got killed, never to return.

"Knowing that this was one of the last few things they did --- inscribing their names into the walls --- is very moving. It's a very humbling experience."



If These Walls Could Speak

By BGen (ret) G Young OMM, MSM, CD

On 25 October 2011 the members of the 15th Battalion Memorial Project were given the opportunity to accompany LCol (ret) Phillip Robinson and members of The Durand Group into the Maison Blanche tunnels near Vimy ridge. These tunnels are not accessible by the general public and contain a large number of carvings and inscriptions left behind by Canadian troops --- including members of the 15th Battalion --- when they occupied the tunnel prior to the assault on Vimy Ridge in April 1917.

The Regimental History records the following:

"The 3rd C.I.B was now placed on the right of the Canadian Corps and near the right of the Ridge.....the 15th Bn relieved the 13th in support in the great chalk caves of Maison Blanche near Neuville St. Vast..... Most of the men were on working parties each night, labouring in the front-lines, supports, and in the tunnels being built behind the front-line. These, in later days, saved hundreds of men who sat deep and laughed as concussions shook the shoring and earth trickled down. They slept in the bad air of the Maison Blanche Caves during the day. There were many strange tales told about these caves. One of them could hold an entire Battalion and, certainly, they were very old and perhaps, as the tales went, once sheltered fugitives of the French Revolution and women and children of Arras during the war of 1870."

The topic of these tunnels is covered in more detail in an article by LCol (ret) Phillip Robinson which also appears in this issue of The Falcon and photographs of some of the 15th Battalion carvings and inscriptions taken by the Canadian Historical Documentation and Imaging group appeared in the September 2011 issue. Suffice to say that all members of the Project Team were very moved to be looking at the images and inscriptions left by men of the 15th Battalion on the walls of this tunnel. This was especially true in a number of cases where the names were recognized as belonging to men that only a few weeks or months later were killed in action at Vimy Ridge in April or Hill 70 in August of 1917. Their parting words viewed again 94 years later by members of their own Regiment.

Several new photographs of some of these names appear with this article.

As if to illustrate how small the world is despite the size of conflicts like the 1914-18



Pte Edward Skeats

Great War and how a chance encounter can bring people together, during the trip the Team became acquainted with several retired Englishmen who were staying with them at Varlet Farm in the Ypres salient. One of them, Mr Anthony Goddard mentioned that his relatives had emigrated to Canada before WWI and had served in the Canadian Corps --- in fact he thought that one of them had served in a killed unit from Toronto. A quick on-line check of Canadian Attestation Papers confirmed that his great uncle Edward Skeats had indeed joined the 134th Battalion. A search of his Record of Service card at Regimental archives upon our return revealed he was sent as a reinforcement to the 15th Bn in November 1916 and was wounded in action by shrapnel during the assault on Vimy Ridge in April 1917. Mr Goddard was pleased to receive a scan of the card with the details of his relative's service. But the story did not end there. Several weeks later CANADIGM requested assistance in identifying names of 15th Bn members photographed in the Maison Blanche tunnels. One of the names in the photograph was none other than that of Edward Skeats. The photograph was dispatched to an ecstatic Mr Goddard in the UK and arrangements have been made for him to accompany CANADIGM and the Durand Group into Maison Blanche this June where he will come face to face with the writing left by his great uncle, Pte Edward Skeats, 15th Battalion.



“WAR HORSE & WAR DOG” - THE STORY OF BRUNO & FRITZ CONTINUES

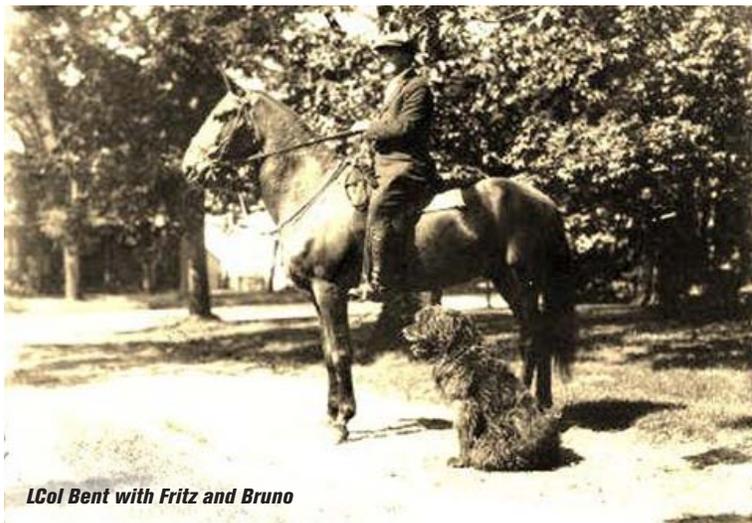
By Brigadier-General G. Young

In the previous two issues of the Falcon, readers were introduced to the stories of the 15th Battalion's two wartime mascots: first Bruno the Belgian sheepdog adopted by LCol Marshall and, after his death, by LCol Bent; and then Fritz, the Russian horse captured from a German officer at The Crow's Nest and also adopted by LCol Bent. After the war, LCol Bent brought both animals home to Paradise NS where they lived out their days together on his farm, eventually being buried side by side when they died.

In Bruno's case, we know what he looked like, as there are a number of photographs of him in archives, including the one of him as a puppy, discovered recently by the Project Team and included in the last issue of the Falcon. But as for Fritz, regrettably, there were no known photographs of him. And so the stories of Bruno and Fritz seemed to come to end with the brief accounts of them found in the Regimental History and a few old photographs in archives. Attempts to track down their final resting place, as well as uncover information about LCol Bent's postwar life, were unsuccessful, even with the assistance of Acadia University archives.

However, all of this changed rapidly and dramatically one morning several days after this past Christmas.

The Spielberg movie "War Horse," and the play by the same name, were both about to premier and media advertising, before and during the Holidays, was quiet intense. I thought that a story about the 15th Battalion's very own 'war horse' might be topical and similar enough to attract interest by the print media. Fritz's story is certainly interesting enough in itself, but it might also help to promote interest in the movie and play and thereby also gain some publicity for the 15th Battalion Memorial Project and The Regiment. The idea was put to Halifax based journalist Richard Foot, who recently accompanied the Project Team for the Fall 2011 memorial dedications in Europe. He decided to make a proposal to editors in the CANWEST/Postmedia chain of daily newspapers. Richard's wife Diane, a producer with CBC radio in Halifax, also thought the idea had merit and arranged for me to tell Fritz's story to Information Morning CBC Radio Halifax in



LCol Bent with Fritz and Bruno



an online live telephone interview with host Bob Murphy. A little over one hour after the interview ended, I received a call from Paradise NS from Mrs Carol O'Neill – the granddaughter of LCol Charles Edward Bent. Friends of hers had heard the program, made the connection and contacted her. She in turn contacted CBC radio who put her in touch with me – a long lost connection between The Regiment and one of its most famous wartime Commanding Officers was re-established.

But the story gets better. Mrs O'Neill informed both me and the CBC that her father, LCol Bent's youngest son Donald, was still alive at 91 years of age and living in Lawrence Town NS. The CBC then quickly arranged an almost immediate follow-up interview involving both Mr Bent and myself, which was taped for broadcast the next day. During the interview Mr Bent recounted his memories of both Fritz and Bruno, who he remembered as a staunch guardian of the farm. Col Bent was apparently greatly

stressed when they eventually grew old, frail and in Fritz's case – according to son Donald Bent - Col Bent had to personally shoot him, as a veterinarian was not available. Both animals must have been living connections, for Col Bent, to his war years, his beloved 15th Battalion and all the men he served with and led. Donald Bent also recalled their resting place on the family farm and is willing to take us to the location. In addition, during my discussions with his daughter, the final missing piece of Fritz's story came to light – she had a photograph, taken at the farm, of all three of the main players in this 15th Battalion saga – LCol

Bent mounted on Fritz with Bruno standing alongside. That photograph of these three 15th Battalion's legends is provided here and it is the best photograph of Bruno I have seen and the only photograph of Fritz that exists. Bruno looks happy and Fritz certainly matches the description of him in the Regimental history – "a splendid, dark bay" – no wonder LCol Bent brought him home.

The CBC interviews can be heard at:

http://www.cbc.ca/video/#/Radio/Local_Shows/Maritimes/Information_Morning_%28NS%29/2035075335/ID=2181270213

Almost immediately following the two CBC Radio interviews, the Postmedia chain of newspapers ran a story on the 15th's war horse written by Richard Foot and it appears in this issue of the Falcon. CTV News Channel National Affairs Channel 62 saw these articles and subsequently asked for an interview with me which aired on Monday Jan 1 2012. This also provided excellent coverage of the story and great publicity for the 15th Battalion Memorial Project and The Regiment. It can be viewed at the following link: <http://watch.ctv.ca/news/national-affairs/#clip594163>.

Several days later another missing piece of the story was also supplied by Carol O'Neill who provided a photograph of LCol Bent's gravemarker in Lawrence Town Cemetery.

Thus, the story of the 'war horse' Fritz, the adopted mascot Bruno and Commanding Officer, LCol Charles Edward Bent CMG, DSO, which started in the trenches and battlefields of The Western Front, during the Great War, came to a peaceful end on a farm in the Annapolis Valley. A new chapter begins, however, as through the 15th Battalion Memorial Project, the Regiment has reconnected with the descendants of one of its most distinguished members and another piece of its proud story is brought to light.

Boy raises \$13,000 for War Pet Monument

CTV Atlantic – Date: Sunday Nov. 27, 2011

Bass River, N.S. — A Maritime boy's Grade 5 project about animals who helped the military during wartime has raised \$13,000 to erect a memorial for the pets in Bass River, N.S.

Noah Tremblay, 11, decided to bring his project to Colchester County Council to raise the final \$3,000 needed to put his plan into action.

Tremblay says that “the soldiers knew exactly how important they were, and that a lot of those animals saved their lives. They always wanted a monument put up for them but it was always denied.”

So far, the young boy has a few design options for his project that will hopefully be unveiled next Canada Day to commemorate the helpful paws and wings of the animals participating in military activities.

15th Bn Memorial Project Chairman's note: Noah Tremblay's family read Richard Foot's article on the Fritz – the 15th Bn's War Horse that appeared in Post Media/CANWEST papers and through him contacted BGen Young to obtain permission to have the names of the 15th Battalion, Fritz, Bruno and LCol Bent added to his memorial when it is erected. Architectural renderings of the memorial accompany this article. The 15th Battalion Memorial Project has made a donation to support Noah's project.



Project Team Expands

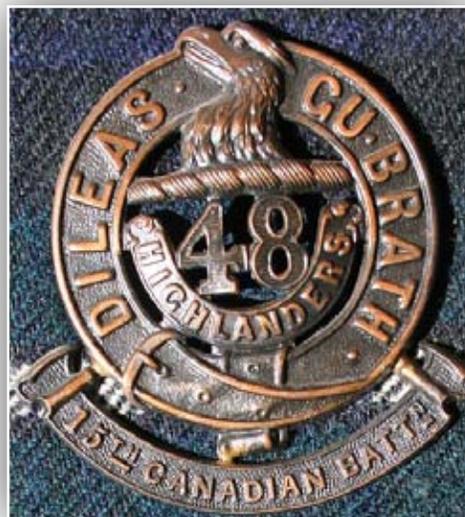
BGen G Young

As a direct result of the expanding work of the 15th Battalion Memorial Project, a number of new members have officially joined the original Project Team. These new Project Team members are: MWO Bob MacDonald (ret'd) and Sgt Guy Bowie (ret'd), who were part of the Record of services scanning team and have taken on the task of developing the project's new website; Maj (former RSM) Bud Gillie, who is assisting with the concept development for the 15th Bn exhibit in the Passchendaele 1917 Memorial Museum; Mr Ian MacDonald, who has been assisting the project with archival scanning – most recently with the Record of services cards; and Mr Simon Godly, in France. Mr Godly has for all practical, purposes been part of the Project Team for the last three years. He played a critical role in Phase Three with the Festubert Memorial and is currently our point man in Europe for all three of the Phase Four potential memorial sites, at Hill 70, Marquion and Courcellette. Welcome aboard to all.



“Hit the Bags – Over the Top”

Having successfully completed Phases One (St Julien , Gravenstafel Ridge & the Crow's Nest in 2010) and Two (Observatory Ridge & Festubert in 2011), the 15th Battalion Memorial Project has launched Phase Three with Hill 70, Canal du Nord and the Somme as the objectives. The “Big Push” has been launched and a number of generous donations have already been received to support the financing of these next three memorials.



EVERY CARD TELLS A STORY

By BGen(ret) G Young OMM, MSM, CD

"Killed in action. Attack on Crow's Nest & Chateau Wood 1.9.18 Killed after reaching final objective during heavy enemy bombardment, concussion caused his death. Time 6.30 am, death resulted immediately."

488732 PRIVATE JOHN WILCOX No. 4 COY

"Killed In action. 1.9.18 Shot through the heart by a rifle bullet and instantly killed at 8 pm when his platoon was occupying shell holes at the objective of the attack."

1045843 PRIVATE GREGORY WARBURTON

"Taking cover in a trench – stood up to place L.G. (Lewis Gun) pannier on parapet and was shot through throat."

799148 PTE JOHN WATTHEWS No. 4 COY

"Attack on Canal du Nord Line – acting as runner on Arras to Cambrai road in Marquion – was hit in leg & was bandaging leg when struck in neck & killed instantly."

27603 PTE HAROLD THORPE No. 2 COY

"This man was hit with pieces from a 5.9 shell immediately South of Hangard Wood (West) at 4.25am August 8th 1918 about three minutes after the attack was started, he was killed instantly. Effects to CBO: Paybook, 1 letter, 1 purse with 3 coins, 1 48th cap badge, 1 diary, 3 postcards, 2 souvenir cards."

800159 PTE JAMES TAYLOR No. 1 COY

Throughout the course of the First World War, the Battalions of the CEF maintained unit level records on all personnel who were on strength of the Battalion on small index cards referred to as 'Record of Services' cards. Many readers of the Falcon will be familiar with the modern equivalent called a UER (Unit Employment Record), which has been in use at Battalion level continuously since at least the 1960s if not earlier. Although the UER is much larger and more complex, its purpose like that of these WWI Record of Services cards is the same, to essentially detail and track the member's activities while on strength of the Battalion. The front side of the card records the normal service and personal particulars of each individual to include: Regimental Number, Surname and Given Names, Enlistment Age, Rank, Company, Religion Date of Attestation, Date of Joining 15th Battalion, Height, Complexion, Original Unit, Decorations, Occupation, Next of Kin and their address. Across the bottom half is a vertical table with sections for date entries to track the individual's status: Killed, Wounded, Died of Wounds, Missing, Prisoner, Hospital, Rejoined and Struck Off. This information reveals a great deal about the individual and the changing demographic composition of the Battalion as the war progressed from 1914 to 1918. The reverse side is completely blank and it was here that all the written details and the descriptive narrative that expands upon the dates from the front side is provided. It is this detail that 'tells each soldier's own story.' The amount and precision of the detail clearly expands and gets better as you follow entries on the cards from 1914 to 1918 – a clear reflection of increased professionalism by those maintaining them. The information contained includes: rank progression (up and down!); courses taken; training taken; illnesses, injuries; wounds received; POW; hospitalization; leave granted and to where; charges and their disposition; stoppages of pay and the reasons why; decorations awarded; circumstances of death including witnesses and burial locations detailed by Grid references; units and

Reg. No. 602090 Name Whittaker, W. J. Age 28
 Rank Private Company X 4th Coy Religion Salvation Army
 Date of Attestation 11.1.15 Date of joining 15th Can. Battn. 24.4.16
 Height 5.8 Eyes Black Complexion Dark Original Unit 3rd
 Decorations 16 Melville St Gall
 Next of Kin Mrs W. Whittaker Address 16 Melville St, Gall
 RECORD OF SERVICES.

Killed	Wounded	Died of W.	Missing	Prisoner	Hospital	Rejoined	Struck Off
					11.6.16 11.8.16 15.3.17	23.6.16 15.8.16 16.12.17	

CORRESPONDENCE, etc.
 On Com. Can Corps Rest Station (Sains Dike) 27.6.17 - 7.7.17
 leave of 10 days to PARIS 6.8.17 to 12.8.17 Ret. 17.8.17 (P.O. No. 79/10.9.17)
 14 days leave to PARIS from 10.3.18 absence 1.4.18 Ret. from leave 13.4.18
 Shown at A.P. 1 C.B.O. 30.3.18 for return to unit, returned to unit, upon (P.O. No. 28/11.4.18)
 Not CO. permission to wear 1 G.O. badge 29.6.17 (No. 28/11.4.18)
 Killed in action 27.6.17. Attack on CANAL du NORD LINE 28
 6.30 a.m. attacking with his platoon, killed by concussion
 of shell in Mill. CASE (W 22 & 60.10) adjacent to the railway
 Ypres-Perwez. Effects to CBO 2.10.18
 Buried at Sains-les-Marquion cemetery Street 51 B. W. 29. B. 11. Plot 1.
 Row B. Grave 20. 28.9.18. (B.P.O. 10/5.10.18)



tasks attached out to or in from; corrections in spelling of names or changes in names if someone joined under a false name; etc. Obviously, in cases where an individual was fortunate enough to have joined in 1914 or 1915 and managed to survive until 1919, the back side of the card is filled with information – some individuals have more than one card. A great many of the names I encountered were very familiar to me, as The Team had visited their graves or memorials during our field research in Europe.

ABOVE CARDS AND PHOTO: Pte W Whittaker Sains-les-Marquion British Cemetery. Top card is the front, one below is the back.

In 1963, the Regiment was relocating from University Street Armoury to temporary quarters at Fort York Armoury, while waiting for the new Moss Park Armoury facility to be constructed. Having occupied University Street Armoury since its founding in 1891, the Regiment naturally went through a significant clean-out and move of 72 years of accumulated material. Inevitably, as one would expect, some of this accumulation ended up in the trash for disposal. The 2007 Fall edition of the Falcon recounts how, then Quartermaster, Captain Alec Shipman recovered a number of boxes that had been discarded and subsequently discovered

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

THE NEW UNIFORM PROJECT FOR THE 48TH HIGHLANDERS CADET CORPS

The 48th Highlanders Royal Canadian Army Cadet (“RCAC”) Corps is an organization which has been serving the needs of inner city, male and female adolescents from the ages of 12 to 18 years, for more than 40 years. This tradition of service continues today.

MAJ Andre Poles, CD is heading up an initiative to raise funds for the 48th Highlanders Cadet Corps. Known as the Cadet Funding Initiative, it is for projects which are recognized by the Canadian Forces and the Army Cadet League of Canada, the sponsors of the RCAC and the Department of National Defense, which funds the RCAC. The first project being funded is the 48th Highlanders Cadet Uniform Project.

Currently, our 48th Cadets are issued a standard green uniform, with ankle boots, which is similar to the Canadian Forces (“CF”) Greens worn by the Regiment. However, the Cadets are authorized to wear a combat style, camouflage uniform, in a pattern distinct from CADPAT (the working uniform worn by our soldiers) while they are working, training and in the field. They can also wear a combat style boot with this camouflage uniform.

THE CF HAS APPROVED THIS UNIFORM FOR USE BY CADETS, BUT DOES NOT PAY FOR EITHER THE UNIFORM OR THE BOOTS.

Since many of the cadets cannot easily afford to purchase these items and it is not appropriate for some cadets to purchase the uniform while others cannot, our cadets’ uniforms, whether in garrison or in the field, could end up being less than consistent and military in appearance. As a result, it is felt that it will be a positive influence on morale and recruiting to purchase cadet combat uniforms and boots for all members of the 48th Highlanders Cadet Corps.

The cost of the uniform and boots for each cadet is about \$125. The goal is to raise \$6,250 to purchase 50 sets of uniforms and boots for our Corps and it is hoped that members of the Regimental Family will contribute to this worthy cause. To contribute, please make your cheque payable to “The 48th Highlanders Trust – Cadet Uniform Project”. A charitable receipt will be provided in the amount of your donation. Please send your cheque to:

**48th Highlanders Trust
C/O LCol (ret) George Turner
1780 Listowel Crescent
Pickering ON LIV 2Y3**

Charitable receipts for donations of \$10 or more will be issued, so please enclose your return address.

Other projects, such as the Cadet Shooting Team and Cadet Pipe Band, will be pursued, after this project is completed. Any over-subscriptions will be applied to these other, worthy, cadet projects.

The cadets thank you for your anticipated generosity.

DILEAS GU BRATH



TOP RIGHT: MCPL Lemon, in the middle, wears the new Cadet working and field uniform, now being purchased as the result of donations. On the left, in formal parade uniform is Cadet WO Guitarde, DSM of the Corps, On the right in garrison training gear is Cadet. Bharati. MIDDLE and BOTTOM: Cadets doing rock wall training & celebrating Halloween.





IMPORTANT UPCOMING REGIMENTAL EVENTS

23 March – Final Parade for DSM, MWO Mark McVety (see photo below)

24 March – Retirement Mess Dinner for DSM, MWO Mark McVety

28 April – Regimental Ball

27 May – Regimental Church Parade

Please check with the BOR at 416-633-6200 (Local 4931) for details on any of these events.



DSM, MWO Mark McVety

48TH HIGHLANDERS ON THE INTERNET

By David Archer

The Falcon is a tried and very successful way in distributing information about the Regiment. Readers still anxiously await the arrival of the newest edition in their mailbox. With the introduction of the 48th Highlanders' website (www.48highlanders.com), I can foresee that one day hard copies of the Falcon will probably be a thing of the past as more and more of the younger generation are reading things online. The Falcon can now be read on the Regimental website. As a bonus for reading it online you can see the colour edition. The site also has several back issues posted that date back to the spring of 2004. If you are missing some of the back issues you can read them here.

In looking to see what other advantages the Regimental website has, I noticed a selection of videos showing the soldiers participating in OP Nanook and OP Cadence. In addition, the website supplies information about such topics as the OCA, Continuing Sergeant's Assoc., 48th Highlanders Officers' Assoc., Ladies Auxiliary, IODE, Pipes and Drums and St. Andrew's College and also has a complete list of all CO's and RSM's of the Regiment.

After exploring all aspects of the Regimental website I wondered what other sites on the Internet were helpful in telling the rich history of the Regiment. Typing in 48th Highlanders of Canada on Google resulted with over 400,000 sites that mentioned the Regiment is some form or other. Some of the better sites that had some great information about the Regiment include:

- Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia and gives a brief history about the Regiment.

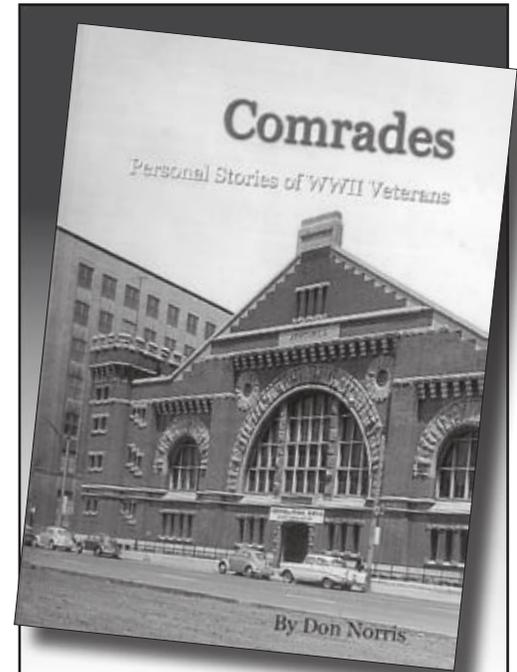
- At www.archive.org you can read copies of two 48th Highlanders books on this site. One being The 48th Highlanders of Canada by Alexander Fraser and the other one is "The Red Watch" by John Currie.

- Facebook has reference to the 48th on many pages and even has some pages dedicated to the Regiment, Pipes and Drums and the Cadets.

- The Canadian Legion site has a "Last Post" section and lists over 500 Highlanders who were also members of the Legion. It gives the last town they lived in and the year they died. This information is helpful to researchers tracking down the history of former members of the Regiment.

- One of the more interesting sites where the 48th Highlanders can be found is YouTube. Here you can find videos related to the Museum, Cadets, Pipes and Drums, Holten Cemetery and the Pipes and Drums of Holland. The newest videos are ones showing highlights from the 120th Anniversary. If you were at the 2011 Remembrance Day Parade, look for one titled "48th Highlanders of Canada 120th Anniversary Salute" and you may find yourself in the video.

These are just a sampling of the websites that mention the 48th Highlanders of Canada. One day you should take the time to search the Internet and see what sites you can find. You would be surprised what is out there.



Comrades

"Comrades" is a book chronicling the lives of sixteen Canadian veterans and their experiences between 1939 and 1945. A Queens Own Rifles veteran tells of the life of a sniper. A member of the Hastings & Prince Edward Regiment has a compelling story of being part of the Devil's Brigade. Yes, a movie was made in 1968 with the same title. William Holden, Cliff Robertson, Jeremy Slate and Vince Edwards starred in the movie. A dispatch rider tells of the rigors of riding a motorcycle through muddy ruts in Italy. A member of the Black Watch Regiment describes finding American paratroopers hanging dead in the trees in Europe. A young patriot from Brampton describes stepping on a landmine in his youth and years later becoming the Commanding Officer of the Lorne Scots. The remaining soldier's accounts are from veterans of the 48th Highlanders of Canada; each one very different from the other.

AUTHOR: Don Norris
PICTURES: Eighteen (mostly coloured)
PAGES: 148
PRICE: \$22.50 plus \$2.50 postage in Canada but Highlanders pay only \$20.
CONTACT: donnorris@rogers.com for order form.

MILITARY BAND ACTIVITIES

By BSM (WO) J. W. Murray, CD

Following a busy summer of performances and recording (see below), the Military Band of the 48th Highlanders of Canada, kicked off an equally busy fall and winter by taking a full parade band (25 pers) to the Cabbagetown Festival on 10 September, 2011. The current size and success of this annual event surprised many band members, who had last performed for it in 1984!

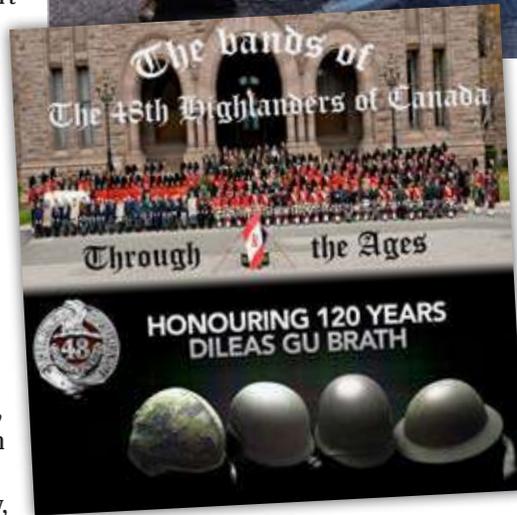
Leading the 48th contingent, including HCOL Newman, members of the 48th Cadet Corps and of the active Regiment, the Military Band encountered cheering crowds in a long parade through the charming streets of this quaint neighborhood and continued to captivate both locals and tourists with a lengthy sidewalk concert in support of the Cabbagetown Community Museum. Together with the band's ongoing work with the Regent Park School of Music, this performance contributed significantly to the maintenance of the Regiment's longstanding footprint in and support of this downtown Toronto community.

Never content to rest on its laurels, the band was out again a week later performing a full concert for 48th and other veterans in K-Wing of Toronto's Sunnybrook Veterans' Hospital. Members of the band look forward to this annual event as much as the veterans do, because it provides us an opportunity to catch up with many old friends.

October and November were unusually busy, with the full band and/or various members performing at: the NHL Leafs Home Opener (6 October), the WO & Sgts Mess Dinner (15 October), the Change of Command Parade (16 October), the RCMC Massed Military Bands Concert (23 October), the Regimental Anniversary Weekend Opening (where we played with the 48th Highlanders of Holland) (4 November), the 48th Mount Pleasant Cemetery Remembrance Ceremony and OCA Dinner (both 5 November), the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Remembrance Service and Regimental Remembrance Day Parade (both 6 November), the Law Society of Upper Canada Remembrance Day Ceremony (10 November) and the RAWF Opening Ceremony (11 November).

The performance year concluded with a bang when the Band played the annual "Star Trek/Star Wars" concert at the Active Battalion's Christmas Dinner (16 December).

By far the highlight of the past season, however, for both members and fans of the Military Band, was the release of a new compact disc recording: *The Bands of the 48th Highlanders*



ABOVE (L to R): Band Sgt Maj, Band Master, LCol Paterson, and HCOL with two Cabbagetown residents holding the Cabbagetown Banner. **LEFT:** The Military Bands new compact disc recording: *The Bands of the 48th Highlanders of Canada - Through the Ages*.

recorded before, and include both traditional and modern pieces including: Waly Waly (The Water Is Wide); Rose of Kelvingrove - a light rock tune arranged by a previous 48th Director of Music, (Capt) (Ret) Roland G. White LRAM, who sadly passed away on August 22, 2011; 79th Farewell To Gibraltar; and, of course, Highland Laddie – our Regimental March for 120 proud years!

Copies of this new recording are available from the Bands' Mess, Regimental Museum, kit shop, or they may also be obtained by asking any member of the band.

Finally, as word spread of the fine work we are doing, we were pleased to welcome a number of new members to our ranks, during the fall months. WO (ret'd) Al Tweten (trombone), who has joined us after many years with the Queens Own Rifles Band, Bill Waddell (percussion), who recently served as Drum Major with the 25 Service Battalion Pipes & Drums, Jacquie Brooks (flute), Nicole DeVries (alto sax), Michelle Dewar (trumpet), Emily Langridge (trombone) and Alice Litherland (flute).

As always, we are interested in talking to musicians (new and old), who may be interested in joining the Military Band.

of Canada ... Through the Ages.

Celebrating the Regiment's 120th Anniversary, and featuring the full Military Band and Pipes and Drums, this recording includes, among other selections, the historical gem: Canadian Patrol - written in 1911 by Captain John Slatter, Bandmaster of the 48th Highlanders; Mannin Veen - a musically challenging compilation of four Manx folk songs which features the woodwind section; How To Train Your Dragon and The Lion King - sound tracks from the movies of the same name; and, of course, Where No Man Has Gone Before – the aforementioned "most requested" favourite from the annual Men's Christmas dinner. The album also includes: Boys of the Old Brigade – a fine British march, traditionally requested by the 48th Old Comrades Association as their march off following the Remembrance Day Parade.

Massed band selections (band with Pipes and Drums) feature the 48th Highlanders Pipes & Drums March - a new arrangement by James Rankin of the P & D, which has never been



ABOVE: Cdr Tim O'Leary, CO HMCS York presenting the Reg't with WW I medals and attestation papers from his distant relative, Herbert McClelland, No. 28061 who joined the 48th on 21 Sep 1912.
TOP RIGHT: Pte Ryan Love, son of WO Dianne Love and Cpl Stephen Love, both retired Highlanders, receives his Campaign Medal in Afghanistan, November 2011.



ABOVE: At the 2011 Royal Winter Fair on Remembrance Day, from Left to Right, LCol Best, Johanna Grönberg, Darcie Clark and, the Reviewing Officer for the night, Col Jay Claggett, 32 CBG Comd.



ABOVE: Author Jean Miso, an ardent supporter of the Regiment, was awarded the Chief of Defence Staff Commander's Coin, in recognition of the support that she has shown to the Canadian Forces through her first book 'We'll Never Forget' and also, her forthcoming publication 'Their Duty, Our Pride,' for which the CDS will write the Introduction.

St Andrew's College Cadets Attend the Reburial of an Unknown World War I Canadian Soldier

By Cindy Veitch (based on notes from Jim McGillivray)

An invitation to attend the reburial ceremony of an unknown First World War Canadian soldier was a once-in-a life-time opportunity, and trip highlight, for a group of 20 St. Andrew's cadets travelling on the corps' 2011 battlefield tour in France and Belgium.

The unexpected honour occurred on the last day of the 11-day trip when a Canadian Forces contingent, in France to conduct the high-profile service, witnessed the boys' participation at the nightly Menin Gate Remembrance Service in the town of Ypres, site of a long period of fighting during the First World War.

When the St. Andrew's cadets inquired about attending the service, they were invited to participate, with dignitaries from the Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force, as well as the Canadian Embassy, at the military burial ceremony at the Pozieres British Military Cemetery.

The Cadets and staff followed the casket into the cemetery, stood front and centre during the service, and laid a wreath to honour the unknown soldier, who was reburied with full military honours. His remains were discovered in 2009 in the Somme region, where he had died nearly 100 years earlier.

The mayor of Pozieres was in attendance at the closed ceremony and thanked the boys for their commitment to remembering the fallen.

It was a surreal finish to an extraordinary trip that started at Normandy's Juno Beach, where Canadians landed on D-Day, and went on to include site tours of battle-scarred fields in Passchendaele, Mount Sorrell, 2nd Ypres and Beaumont Hamel, visits to monuments to honour the fallen and tours of military cemeteries that are the final resting place for thousands of Canadian, allied, and German soldiers lost in both World Wars.

For cadet Corporal Graeme Allison, it was an emotional trip that became even more so when he was able to locate the name of his great great uncle, William Ernst Neil, engraved on the Vimy Memorial. Neil, from Exeter, Ont., was 23 years old when he lost his life during battle in 1918. His name is carved along with those of 11,285 other Canadian soldiers, who were killed in France and whose final resting place was unknown.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

“It was very moving to realize my relative was among all those people who gave up their lives, their futures, so we could have a future,” says Allison, who had only found out about his uncle’s existence a few days before the trip when his mother, Donna, gave him a sketched drawing of him that she’d obtained from her mother, and a copy of his actual enlistment papers she’d searched for and found online.

Accompanying the boys on SAC’s ninth annual battlefield tour were Major Brian McCue, Commanding Officer of the School’s Cadet Corps, Captain Vic Goldman, a retired school teacher, 48th Highlander and expert on World War 1 history, and Jim McGillivray, Director of St. Andrew’s College Piping Program. McGillivray, who is a world-class piper, lived out a dream by playing the lament at the Menin Gate service, while the boys stood as the Honour Guard in front of several hundred spectators. The St. Andrew’s group had been part of this ceremony in past trips, but never with such distinction.

“The whole tour was an eye-opener, for all involved, regarding the horrific history of two world wars,” said McGillivray. “But to also be able to participate at the famous Menin Gate service, which has taken place every evening since November 11, 1919, and to participate in the funeral of a soldier of the Great War were moving and irreplaceable experiences for our students. Our boys are only a couple of years younger than many of the soldiers who lost their lives in that war.”

Among other activities during the trip, the St. Andrew’s students found graves of some of the 113 former St. Andrew’s students who died in the First World War, paying tribute by leaving flags, poppies and cards of tribute.



TOP: Dieppe then and now.

ABOVE : St Andrew’s cadets conduct Service of Remembrance on Juno Beach in front of Canada House.

BOTTOM LEFT: St Andrew’s cadets at Pozieres British Cemetery attend funeral of Unknown Canadian soldier killed in 1916 during the Battle of the Somme. Photos by Jim McGillivray

Worth Remembering – Some Thoughts from Maj (ret) George Pearce CD

One of the world’s greatest statesmen, and a master of the King’s English, expressed his thoughts on regiments coincidentally in the same year that the official alliance of the 48th Highlanders of Canada and the Gordon Highlanders formed, the first such bond between a regiment of the British Army and a regiment of a Commonwealth country.

His timeless words provide a reminder of the folly of enacting amalgamations to satisfy defence cuts:

“Regiments are not like houses; they cannot be pulled down and altered structurally to suit the convenience of the occupier or the caprice of the owner. They are more like plants. They grow slowly if they are to grow strong...and if they are blighted or transplanted they are apt to wither.”

- Winston Churchill 1904

I note that our Regimental website :

(a) does not, in all cases, include the date

1904 in reference to the first alliance.

(b) now states that we are allied with The Highlanders (4th Bn The Royal Regiment of Scotland). I submit that this is incorrect.

Our alliance was and remains only with the Gordons. We have no alliance with the Seaforths and Camerons. Amalgamations create a necessary merging of or complete change in titles. Alliances are another matter, established one time by date. In this regard, they remain unchanged in the same way that battle honours remain unchanged. Please correct me if I am wrong.

(c) uses the American term ‘honour guard’ in relation to recent Regimental public duties. This misuse of the correct term, ‘Guard of Honour’, is becoming more and more prevalent even at higher DND levels. I waged war with the media over this for a long period of time.

Their lame excuse for using the American term was that it takes up less space in print.

My reply was that it expresses less knowledge and causes my wrath in words not fit to print.

DILEAS



“DILEAS 120” REUNION WEEKEND

LEFT TO RIGHT: with copies of “That Dileas Spirit,” 1st and 2nd Battalion World War Two Veterans George McLean, Tom White, Bill DeHarte, Syd Redgrave, Herb Pike, Morris Tracy and Wally Moore



“THAT DILEAS SPIRIT” DVD - A MAJOR HIT AT THE 48TH 120TH REUNION

The release of the new DVD “That Dileas Spirit” at the 48th Highlanders 120th reunion weekend in Toronto during November 2011 proved to be a major hit. It was by far the most popular souvenir item sold to attendees on the weekend.

The video, which recounts the history of the Regiment during World War II (1939-45), is a three-hour documentary featuring interviews with 21 of our unit’s veterans as well as historical film footage from various government and media sources. The project took two years of interviewing, filming, script writing and editing to complete.

Reaction to the video by Regimental Family members was unanimously positive with many Reunion attendees purchasing multiple copies for their own families and friends.

“This is a video that every one of our 48th Highlanders should own,” said RSM Ray Joseph as he recently praised the efforts of the 48th Video History Legacy (VHL) Committee in preparing the video and adding an extra dimension to the Regiment’s recorded history.

Perhaps the most poignant reception to “That Dileas Spirit” was at the annual OCA Remembrance Dinner on November 5th



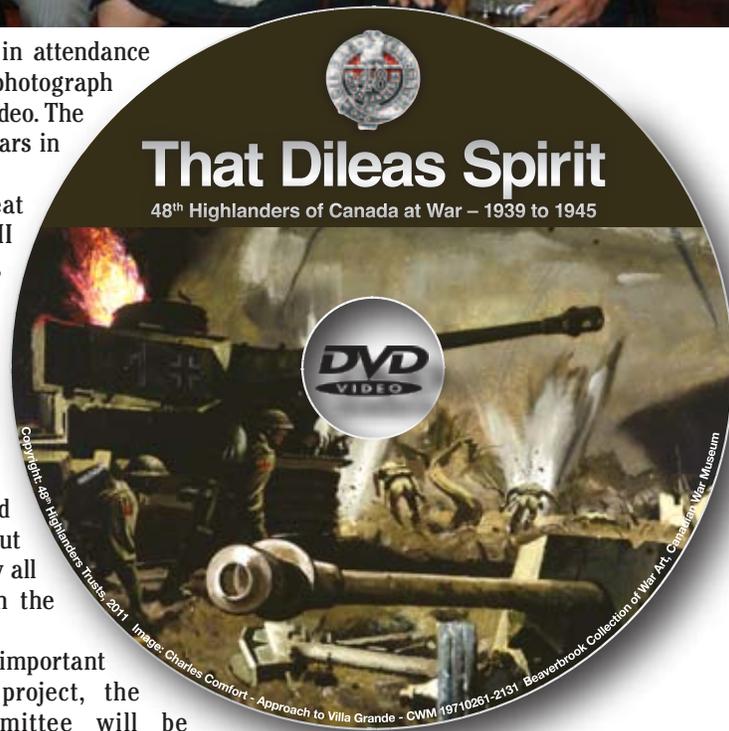
Al Kowalenko

when the WWII veterans in attendance assembled for a group photograph holding a copy of the new video. The photo of the veterans appears in this issue of The Falcon.

“This video is a great tribute to our 48th WWII veterans” said Herb Pike, who was interviewed for the video and figures prominently in the commentary on various battles during the Italian Campaign. He said the video would help younger generations understand what the War was all about and the sacrifices made by all those who participated in the campaign.

To follow up on this important historical project, the VHL Committee will be moving forward to interview all the key post WWII veterans of the Regiment during the next five years until the 125th Reunion takes place in 2016 in Toronto. Those to be interviewed will include past Commanding Officers, RSMs, Korean veterans, peacekeeping veterans, Afghan veterans, Pipes & Drums, and other prominent members of the Regimental Family.

VHL Committee Members include former unit serving members Geordie Beal, Al Kowalenko, Steve Gilbert, Dave Archer and Don



Norris who will again be working with technical consultants on the project. The Committee is currently looking for assistance with camera equipment and studio locations to carry on the archival interviews in future.

Copies of “That Dileas Spirit” may be obtained through the 48th Highlanders Canteen at Moss Park Armoury, or at the 48th Regimental Museum at St. Andrew’s Church in Toronto.

For more information contact Al Kowalenko, email: ursa77@rogers.com, Tel: 416-219-4967.



A Tribute to the Video History Legacy Project Donors

The "Dileas Spirit" DVD Production Team has been recognized elsewhere in this edition of the Falcon and Phase One of their project successfully completed. It is therefore appropriate to acknowledge and thank the Donors listed below, whose generosity ensured that creating and producing "That Dileas Spirit" would be possible:

Al Kowalenko
 Bruce E. Brown
 Chris Barratt
 Colin J Rainsbury
 David Roland
 Derek Frost
 Donald Greer
 Dr. Thomas McKean
 Geordie Beal
 George Kelly
 George MacLean
 George Turner
 Gerald L Russell
 Harry Hodgson
 Herbert Foden
 Isabel Redgrave
 J.F. Jansen
 James T. Cassie
 Jim Boggiss
 Jim Holman
 John B Newman
 John Lowndes
 John Sandham
 John Stephens
 John Zehngraff-Iverser
 Joyce Leigh
 Jurry H Hulzebos
 Kenneth C Walduck
 Kenneth Hearn
 Maxwell MacDougall
 Michael Lawson
 Morris Tracy
 Murray P Thomas
 Patricia A Boyce
 Peter MacLeod
 Quenda Stern
 Robert Darling
 Robert Fraser
 Robert H. Nuttall
 Robert Ronan
 Ross Haywood
 Shirley Stewart
 Thomas White
 W. Fenton Carroll

It is important for all of us to remember that, because of the somewhat limited availability of funds from our Trust, without donations, many of our Regimental Family projects, such as this one, could not be undertaken.

J.B.N. HCOL



From the Museum - a 1st Battalion/ Bill DeHarte Anecdote

In October 2011 the Museum received an e-mail enquiry from Newdigate in England. The 48th Highlanders 1st Battalion had been stationed there a mere three months in 1940, from mid-July to the beginning of October. However, it appears that the Regiment made an impression on the local population. The email, from John Callcut, stated:

"I am writing from Newdigate which is a small village on the Surrey/Sussex borders in Southern England. I will shortly be publishing a book about Newdigate in the First World War [A Village at War by John Callcut] and this got me thinking about the Second World War. An elderly lady in the village told me that many Canadians soldiers were here at The Red House and Newdigate Place.

One of the members of our local history society saw an article in the Summer 2005 edition of The Falcon which has a description of some members of the 48th Highlanders and their exploits with the local cider! We would very much like to have permission to repeat the piece about the village in our own magazine.

We would be very pleased to hear from anyone with memories of their time in the village."

The article that Callcut mentioned was by Bill DeHarte and, characteristic of his wonderful ability to remember day to day events and exploits, read like a novel. Permission was granted for the article to be republished in the village magazine.

A following message from Callcut contained four pictures. Two were of houses, in which the lucky ones from the Battalion were housed. The rest of the Battalion was stationed under the trees around the town, a location that DeHarte recalled as dripping endless rain on vehicles, tents and Highlanders. The other two pictures were of the only pubs in town, Six Bells and Surrey Oaks. Dileas comments that the pubs were so small that they ran dry in 30 minutes. (Highlanders never seem to change!)



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: 1. Newdigate Place
2. Red House 3. Six Bells 4. Surrey Oaks

When shown the photos Bill DeHarte and Wally Moore recognized the pubs immediately. Both remembered the endless rain as the "highlight" of their stay in Newdigate.



STONE CARVED BY 15TH BATTALION SOLDIER DONATED TO 48TH MUSEUM

At the Remembrance Day dinner in November the members of the 48th Highlanders Pipes and Drums of Holland made a surprise presentation. They unveiled a large, 20 kilo building stone that they had brought with them on their visit to attend the 120th Anniversary weekend celebrations of the 48th Highlanders.

On the stone was carved: 48th Highlanders and the name of a 15th battalion soldier “Ross”.

With the stone was a small red book with the story and photos of how it was found. Every member of the band had signed inside the front cover.

As the stone was unveiled from its carefully made wooden packing case, Tonnie van Amersfoort, President of the 48th Highlanders Pipes and Drums of Holland explained how the stone came into their possession.

In May 2011, Michel Fauret, a student piper of the Somme Battlefield Pipe Band, was visiting the small town of Bouvigny-Boyeffles in the north of France, just west of Lille and across the border from Mons in Belgium. Michel had stopped to watch masons constructing a wall for a small flowerbed in the garden of a home for the elderly. The masons were using a pile of large, white bricks that had come from the demolition of a wing of the building three years earlier. As he watched Michel spotted the engraving 48th Highlanders on one stone and went into the construction area. After explaining to the indignant masons as to why he was interested in the stone, Michel was permitted to take it from the site.

As the Somme Pipe Band had a close friendship with the 48th Highlanders of Holland Michel had recognized the significance of the stone. He contacted his friends immediately.

Further investigation revealed that the building, originally a 12th century farmhouse and then a monastery until 1965, had been used as an army camp and a hospital by the Royal 22nd Regiment and the 15th Battalion, 48th Highlanders during the First World War.

Tonnie van Amersfoort then presented former HCol Geordie Beal with the stone as a gift of the 48th Highlanders Pipes and Drums of Holland to the Regiment on its 120th Anniversary, so that it could be put on display in the 48th Museum.

The museum intends to research the name “Ross” to see if the particular soldier who appears to have carved the stone can be identified. The results of this research and the presentation book will form part of the display in the museum with the stone.

TOP: CO Alan Best with John Dunne, OCA President, prepares to present a scroll, donated by the HCol, to Tonnie van Amersfoort of the 48th Highlanders Pipes and Drums of Holland. **MIDDLE:** The engraved stone in its travel case is held proudly by Drum Major Jan Scholten and QM/Secretary John Fundter of the 48th Highlanders Pipes and Drums of Holland **BOTTOM:** Building site in Bouvigny-Boyeffles during demolition.



PORTRAIT OF HER MAJESTY PRESENTED TO MUSEUM

At the Remembrance Day dinner on the evening of November 5, renowned artist Christian Corbet presented his portrait of Her Majesty to the 48th Highlanders Museum. LCol Allan Best and OCA President John Dunne accepted the portrait on behalf of the Regiment and the Museum.

In making the donation of his work Mr. Corbet stated that he wished to recognize and honour the 48th Highlanders of Canada for their outstanding service to Canada. The portrait is the first dual portrait that Mr. Corbet has created. In his contact with Buckingham Palace to gain approval to represent Her Majesty in the portrait he also received permission to date the portrait 1947 – 2012. This recognizes the 65 years that Her Majesty has been Colonel-in-Chief of the 48th Highlanders of Canada, from December 1, 1947 when as Princess Elizabeth Her Majesty accepted the Her first three appointments as Colonel-in-Chief.

The sculpted portrait shows Her Majesty on the left in 1947 as Princess Elizabeth and on the right as a contemporary portrait of today. In the centre top is the Royal cipher and at the bottom a 48th Highlanders badge. Maple leaves adorn each corner. The portrait will be placed on the entrance wall of the 48th Highlanders Museum in an unveiling ceremony to be held later in 2012.

Christian Cardell Corbet is one of Canada’s most notable artists. He has the unique ability to both paint and sculpt. Having lived in four Canadian provinces he has a deep sense of the Canadian landscape and experience. His paintings, such as his popular iceberg works, depict a keen and powerful insight into the nature of Canada. He has gained international acclaim for his bronze art medallions which depict notable world figures, including Sir Winston Churchill, Dame Jane Goodall and Margaret Attwood. He has gained recognition as a portrait sculptor and Forensic Artist working as Artist in Residence at the University of Western Ontario where he creates forensic facial reconstructions on assignment. His most recent reconstruction was for the Department of National Defense aiding in the identification of a WWI soldier.

At 14 Corbet began his informal education

with his paternal grandfather. His formal education followed at the University of Guelph and McMaster University. In 1994 Corbet moved to Vancouver where he was befriended and influenced by such renowned painters as Jack Shadbolt and Jack Reid. In 1995, while in England expanding his artistic range, his bronze portrait (sculpture) of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, presented at Clarence House, launched his international career.

Corbet’s works can be found in many distinguished permanent collections including the Imperial War Museum, British Museum, Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museum, DND Navy Headquarters, the Rijksmuseum in The Netherlands and the Supreme Court of Canada.

RIGHT: Christian Cardell Corbet describing his portrait donation at the Remembrance Dinner

BELOW: LCol Allan Best, CD and OCA President John Dunne accepting the portrait.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II - Colonel-in-Chief 1947-2012

BOTTOM: A close up of the portrait.



A NEW INFORMATION CENTRE AT THE CANADIAN CEMETERY HOLTEN, HOLLAND

by Ans van Amerongen

In September 2011, this centre was officially opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and her husband Pieter van Vollenhove. It is located next to the cemetery.

The aim of this information centre is to give the visitor to the cemetery a clear insight into the design of the graveyard, the soldiers killed in action, who are buried there and to be able to tell some particular stories about these soldiers.

At the entrance to the centre there is a huge map of Northeast Netherlands, on which visitors can discover how the armies moved through the area, the dates of liberation of various villages and towns and the number of soldiers killed in action.

On the other side is the entrance to the cinema, the heart of the centre. It sheds light on all aspects of the cemetery. On the outside wall of the cinema you will find the names of 1,394 soldiers who were buried in Holten.

In the middle there are some tables. On one of them there is an extensive digital database with the possibility to retrieve a number of stories of soldiers who were killed. In this database, there is information about the Highlanders who were killed in action and are buried in Holten, including LCol MacKenzie.

Other features include another table with a touch screen to access eyewitness stories about soldiers and about inhabitants of the Netherlands, a big panoramic picture of the cemetery with 8 displays and 4 touch screens, a “Tranquility Bench” where soft music is played and, on the way to the exit, a tiled wall, made by pupils from primary schools in Holten, which reflects on the theme of “war and peace.”



REMEMBRANCE DAY AT SUNNYBROOK

by David Archer

Remembrance Day, when all the members of the 48th Highlanders are on Parade including the Regiment, the Pipes and Drums, Military Band, OCA, 48th Cadets and St. Andrews College Cadets and special guests such as, this year, the Pipes and Drums of Holland. It's a day when we march as comrades and gather at the Cenotaph to remember those Highlanders who made the supreme sacrifice for both the Regiment and for Canada.

Afterwards, we gather at the messes to honour our veterans who did return. We may buy them a beer and thank them for what they did for us and for Canada. Missing, however, are the Veterans that are in Sunnybrook Hospital.

Remembrance Day is a very exciting day for these vets. It is a day they look forward to with much anticipation.

This year Sunnybrook wanted to do something special for their veterans and so they placed 5000 Canadian flags on the lawn in front of the Veterans Wings. When the Veterans woke up and looked out the window they could see how much respect Canadians had for them.

Many of the veterans got up early, as they all wanted to be in Warrior's Hall for the Remembrance Ceremony. The Highlanders set out from their rooms wearing their blazers, glens and medals. By 9:00AM the main hall was full and they all sat patiently waiting for the Colours to be marched on. They heard speeches of welcome and they listened as Chaplain Wes Roberts as he led the Dedication of the Memorial Wreaths prayer and they saw the laying of the Memorial Wreaths.

Some veterans got emotional when John McDermott sang Danny Boy. Every Highlander thinking McDermott was singing the song for them. The “Official Greeting” was presented by The Honourable David C. Onley, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. The Highlanders heard the Last Post and Lament, which was followed by a Moment of Silence and Reveille. Those veterans that were able, stood for the singing of O Canada and remained standing for God Save the Queen. At the conclusion of the ceremony some Veterans went outside to see the flags. Others returned to their rooms.

After the Ceremony, the sister-in-law of fellow Highlander, Jim Shontaler asked me “Can you please come up and see Jim?” “It

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

“DILEAS 120” REUNION WEEKEND



would make his day. He would be so pleased to see a fellow Highlander today. Especially today, it being Remembrance Day.” And indeed, he was very pleased. I also stopped in to see several other Highlanders that day, including Norman Bell, Jack McKenna, Ken Soper and Vic Cooper. They all thanked me for coming. As one Highlander said to me: “ I looked around all morning and did not see one Damn Highlander. I’m glad you look the time to come and see us”.

And I am glad I did too. I hope many more Highlanders will go next year to see them. All they really want is to be “Remembered”

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: 1. Vic Cooper. 2. Ken Soper 3. Jim Shontaler 4. Jack McKenna 5. Norm Bell. TOP LEFT: Canadian flags on the lawn in front of the Veterans Wing at Sunnybrook.



The Nazi Occupation Of Amsterdam

By Jan Jansen (OCA and Regt Museum staff member),
born and raised in Amsterdam (1927 to 1953)

The last year of the war was very different from the earlier 4 years. Rationing of food, clothing etc had been in effect since the occupation of the Netherlands in May 1940. However, due to a general railway strike in the Netherlands in September 1944, logistics broke down and, together with retaliation by the Germans, started the "Hunger Winter", a famine of severe proportions.

Pogroms against the Jews had stopped in 1943/4, because there were hardly any Jews left in Amsterdam. Yet, we still saw the yellow star on their clothing and saw window signs displaying "JEWS VERBOTEN". What had happened to the deported Jews? Nobody knew. Nobody was allowed to have a radio. News was heavily censored and distributed only via authorized channels.

Street pogroms against the Dutch population intensified. Before September 1944, men over 18 were called up by mail to report for work in Germany and had no choice but to comply. If they didn't, they could be picked up at home and sent to camps. Many men (18-50) did not comply and had to "dive under" (onderduiken), mainly in small villages and on farms. For an Amsterdammer to find a hiding place in Amsterdam itself was almost impossible. Amsterdam was a tightly-knit and overcrowded city. To hide a "capable" man could lead to deportation or a death sentence for himself and his family.

During the Hunger Winter, the weekly food ration was half a mini-loaf of inferior wet potato bread and some oil. The daily ration, to be fetched at some distribution facility by bringing one's own pot, was some watery soup. Most homes had created a "wonder stove". This was a large metal can with some holes. For cooking or for some heat, households would burn whatever wood they could find, often by cutting up their own shelves or doors.

There was a curfew from 9 pm till 6 am. The city became abandoned. No streetlights; no noise from traffic or radios; no pedestrians. At 6 am people would be leaving their homes to stand in line, at a distribution location, to get food with their coupons. I myself had to line up quite often from 6 am for up to 4 or 5 hours and then sometimes to hear that food had run out.

By November 1944, the only amenity available in Amsterdam was the water supply. No electricity; no streetcars; no heat (from coal, gas or wood). Empty streets; no man between 18 and 50 could be seen. Such a person could be picked up, together with his bicycle, and not heard from again.

From the time that the occupation began, every person over 14 had to carry an ID, at all times, which showed a picture and a fingerprint.

During the 5 war years, no new housing was built, while many were bulldozed under or were gutted for firewood. The empty homes were the ones abandoned by Jewish families.

During the Hunger Winter I often saw corpses carried over one's shoulder to a nearby park for burial. I saw many bodies floating in canals. Bodies could be taken to a downtown church (if one had the energy to transport one on foot), where they were stacked 10' high. The winter was severe and the cold kept the remains frozen.

Amsterdam was the last city to be liberated. Armistice came just in time. People were dying in droves. Allied airplanes dropped tons of food over Schiphol in April and

May 1945, and the existing distribution system, thanks to German or German/Dutch efficiency, kicked in. Distribution centres would then display a notice "Coupon ABC 367 valid for 100 grams of bread.....Coupon XVZ good for 50 grams of corned beef" etc. I am proud to say that we never heard of such food ending up on the black market. Nowadays we see food "distributed" during a famine in a third world county. Bags are just thrown out of planes or trucks. It looks like "survivor of the fittest". But in the Netherlands, in 1945, there still was left some functioning system through coupons and passable roads and canals.

Such are some of my impressions. To have been occupied for 5 years, drained of men, material and goods; and then to be liberated is unforgettable. These memories are therefore passed to the children. They continue learn, in our schools, about Holland's occupation by the Nazi regime. Like those of us who were there, they have learned to say:

THANK YOU CANADA

OCA DINNER 5 NOVEMBER 2011



"DILEAS 120" REUNION WEEKEND

REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY QUEENS PARK 6 NOV 2011



MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETARY 5 NOV 2011



Padre Bailey's Sermon, Remembrance Day 2011.

Let us now praise famous men... Some... Have no memorial, who have perished as though they had not lived... but these were men of mercy, whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten...

That is the voice of Holy Scripture written by the Son of Sirach almost 200 years before the birth of Christ. It speaks of great men, of glorious accomplishments and of the benefits their society reaped as a result of their lives and actions. It recognizes that great people are a gift from God.

It is good to remember. It is good to stand here today, as part of a regiment that has just celebrated its 120th year of service, and to think back on those men who answered the call of King and Country, and who gave their lives for the cause of freedom and peace. It is good to remember that freedom cannot be taken for granted, for it is usually won—and certainly maintained—at great cost.

The men we remember today fought and fell in the great battles of our regimental life. The Boer War, two World Wars and the Korean Conflict have each seen the spilling of rich Highlander blood. These men—for men they all were at the time—answered the call. They helped change the world. We must never forget them, for we owe them so much.

Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Those we remember did just that. They loved us—whether they knew us or not—to the extent that their blood won our freedom. Let us thank God for them. Let us honour them in our lives and service.

And although Remembrance Day was established to commemorate the Fallen, I cannot help thinking of their comrades who fought and returned home from war. They didn’t give their lives on the field of battle, but they were prepared to. Some were wounded physically. Some came home with battle fatigue, the spiritual and emotional shrapnel that enters deep into the soul of a person, inflicting pain and suffering throughout their lives. And—wounded or not—all gave the precious gift of their youth and innocence, doing and experiencing things the average citizen either could not, or else would not choose to do.

Look around you. See our Veterans and those from the Allied Forces whose faces are lined with age, and whose chests carry the medals that signify their great contribution to peace. These are our heroes, worthy of our respect, our thanks and our prayers. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you. God bless you all.



And look around again. There is a new generation of Veterans; men and women who—like those we are here to honour—have served Canada in more recent conflicts. Cyprus, Bosnia, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and elsewhere—wherever there is the need, you can expect 48th Highlanders to respond. I urge you to pray for all who do and to ask God to be with them in life and in death.

In his poem, *In Flanders’ Fields*, Colonel John McCrae said this:

*To you, from failing hands we throw
The Torch. Be yours to hold it high...*

Highlanders and fellow citizens of this great land: Those whom we honour during this week of Remembrance have thrown us the Torch. We lift that Torch high, whenever we work for the good, whenever we strive for peace, whenever we sacrifice ourselves for the good of others. From our glorious Fallen, into our hands, and onward to our posterity, that Torch must go. Let us not fumble it or drop it. Instead let us remain *Dileas gu Brath*—faithful for ever, because the cause of freedom and peace demands everything we can give to it.

Truly, as Jesus says, no greater love exists, than to lay down, or to be prepared to lay down, one’s life for the sake of others. Those we remember today—these famous men (and women)—gave their today for all our tomorrows.

If, now, we stand tall and proud as a Regiment, it is in large measure because we follow in the footsteps of those who stood tall and proud before us. As Scripture says, they “were men of mercy, whose deeds shall not be forgotten.”

DILEAS GU BRATH



HIGHLANDERS CONFINED TO BARRACKS

SUNNYBROOK HOSPITAL - VETERANS WING



BELL, Norman K2E 27 . .416-487-5611
COOPER, Vic L3E 325 . 647-341-8573
LEONARD, StanleyLGE 23
McKENNA, Jack K2E 02 . 647-349-0669
McMAHON, Jim L2E 216
SHONTALER Jim K2C 21 . 416-483-4349
SOPER Ken K1W 27 . 416-487-2990

SPECIAL CARE UNITS

GREEN, Stuart Not Listed
CARTER, Cliffordc/o Susan Hampson 519-424-9784

CONFINED AT HOME - PROBLEMS GETTING AROUND

COLTON, G.E. 819-683-2323

*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.*



MARCH 2012

DILEAS GU BRATH



IN MEMORIAM

Kenneth Slote	January 29th 2011	Dundas, ON
Samuel Cook	Feb 27th 2011	Belleville, Ontario
John W. Elliot	March 18th, 2011	Bracebridge
Joseph Stiller	April 27th 2011	Windsor, ON
John Sweetman	June 2011	Toronto, ON
William Cameron "Bud" Brown	July 27th 2011	Lindsay, Ontario
John MacFarlane	July 30th 2011	Toronto, ON
Don McCron	October 16th 2011	Toronto, ON
John (Jack) Cooney	November 12th 2011	Parry Sound, ON
Paul Shalapata	Nov 22nd. 2011.	Toronto, ON
Norman Gray	November 29th 2011	Port Perry, ON
Norm Cromie	December 1st 2011	Riverside, California
William (Bill) Kelly	December 7th 2011	Cobourg, ON
William McLean	December 2011	Toronto, ON
James McNickle	December 18th 2011.	Peachland, BC
Darby (Milton) McCarrol	December 28th 2011.	Brantford, ON
Strachan Heighington	January 9th 2012	Toronto, ON
Joseph Estrin	February 27th 2012	Toronto, ON

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

