



## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News June 14, 2016

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

**Wednesday Lunches** The 15 Field Officers Mess serves a 5 course, 'homemade' meal for only \$15- you won't find a better meal - or a better deal, anywhere. If you are in the area on a Wednesday, drop in and join us for lunch. Jacket and tie required, equivalent for ladies. We are now pushing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed lunch each month as the Van Arty Association lunch and encouraging members to attend. Come meet some old friends and help with the Yearbook project.

**NOABC Lunch – 29 June** - Lieutenant Commander Lucas Kenward, RCN will speak on "Operation Caribbe" *Note: because of service requirements, this presentation may have to change venues or be postponed.*

### World War 2 - 1941

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

**June 15<sup>th</sup>:** Croatia joins the Tripartite Pact. Wavell has been nagged into taking offensive action (Operation Battleaxe) before he has his new tanks and replacements in working order, and 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured and 4<sup>th</sup> Indian take a pounding at Halfaya Pass and Hafid Ridge. Vichy forces in Syria stage a counterattack and retake Marjayoun, but Sidon falls in the east and a satellite town of Damascus, Kiswe, is also captured. In Romania, a highly educated and cultured diplomat and jurist named Constantin Karadja is appointed to head the consular department of the Foreign Ministry. Over the next three years, he will use every power at his disposal to save some 51,000 European Jews from deportation and death. He is later named Righteous Among the Nations.

**June 16<sup>th</sup>:** The British attacks continue in Libya, but they are rapidly spending their strength while making little dent on the Germans. The Vichy French in Syria retake El Quneitra. Roosevelt orders all German and Italian consulates in the US to be closed.

**June 17<sup>th</sup>:** Wavell ends Operation Battleaxe by withdrawing his depleted armour as the Germans regroup for a counterstroke. The Australians capture Jezzine, near Sidon, and British troops (the Habforce Group – whose main element is a cavalry brigade) in Iraq start moving into Syria. Hitler decides that the invasion of the USSR will commence on 22 June.

**June 18<sup>th</sup>:** The Germans sign a ten-year Treaty of Friendship with Turkey. Germany gets some strategic minerals out of Turkey, sells them obsolescent military gear, and usually keeps a Panzer Division garrisoned in southeastern Bulgaria over the next several years.

**June 19<sup>th</sup>:** The Vichy French mousetrap an Indian battalion outside Damascus and annihilate it. Germany and Italy respond to Roosevelt’s order to shut down their consulates in the US with similar orders of their own.

**June 20<sup>th</sup>:** Finland calls up all its reservists under 45 years of age. A German U-boat spots USS Texas off Greenland, prepares an attack, then radios for permission to torpedo the unsuspecting American battleship, but is told to restrain itself.

**June 21<sup>st</sup>:** The British round up another 19,000 Italian POWs in operations southwest of Addis Ababa. Damascus falls into British hands.

## **IronVision Helmet Provides Sight Through Armored Tanks**

*Barbara Opall-Rome, Defense News June 8, 2016*

HAIFA, Israel — Elbit Systems, the Israeli firm whose Helmet Mounted System (HMS) is used on helicopters and fighters worldwide, including the new F-35, is debuting a similar sensor-fused system that allows tank commanders to essentially see through the walls of their armored vehicles. Called IronVision, the vehicle-adapted HMS provides “protective glass walls” for tank or armored fighting vehicle crews who may need to operate in so-called closed-hatch mode when maneuvering in high-threat areas, according to Boaz Cohen, director of Elbit’s land systems division. “Ground warfare has changed dramatically in the past 15-20 years from open areas to closed, complex urban terrain. We believe IronVision will change the way ground maneuvering forces fight in this new environment,” Cohen told Defense News.



*IronVision displays 360 degree, high-res imagery from data collected from digital sources in and around the vehicle. Photo: Elbit*

In an interview at Elbit headquarters, Cohen said the helmet system, which the firm adapted from technologies developed for airborne platforms, lets wearers “see through” the armor of their vehicle to locate, identify, track and engage enemy forces and threats. “When forces are protected, they don’t need to apply as much fire. This is critically important in urban warfare, when you don’t

want to fire all over the area and kill uninvolved civilians,” he said. Elbit plans to demonstrate the system at next week’s Eurosatory exhibition in Paris. According to the Elbit executive, IronVision displays 360-degree, high-resolution imagery from data collected from digital sources in and around the vehicle. Imagery is projected in full color to the wearer’s visor and is of a fidelity high enough to track individual commandos crawling within meters to enemy vehicles travelling up to 300 meters away.

Cohen acknowledged that it could take time for prospective users to adapt to the concept of closed-hatch operations, especially when forces have been trained for decades that leadership and full situational awareness demands a commander’s head outside the tank. “I agree that it’s preferable to have your head outside. In peacekeeping operations, you want to show presence. But when you get into a high-threat situation, the question becomes: Can you have your head outside and survive? The minute a sniper hits a tank commander, everybody dives in,” Cohen said.

## **Drone Sighting Prompts Scrambling of 2 CF-18 Fighter Jets**

NORAD dispatched two CF-18 fighter jets to the skies over Ottawa after a drone was spotted flying near the airport of the nation's capital last month. The CF-18s were scrambled from CFB Bagotville in Quebec at about 1745hrs ET on May 25, after commercial airline operators raised concerns about a "suspicious" unmanned aerial vehicle seen near the Ottawa airport, according to a Department of National Defence spokesperson. The drone was spotted by the pilots of WestJet Flight 366, from Toronto to Ottawa, as well as Air Canada Flight 458, also from Toronto to Ottawa.

The WestJet pilots flew past the drone as the Boeing 737 plane was descending into the Ottawa airport at about 1645hrs ET. The pilot's call to the airport's air traffic controllers was recorded by the website [liveATC.net](http://liveATC.net), which monitors air traffic control communications across the globe. "Just to let you know we just flew pretty close to a drone at 6,700 feet," a pilot can be heard telling air traffic controllers. After confirming the altitude, the pilot was advised to continue the plane's heading and descent. The pilots of the Air Canada flight spotted the drone on their descent in an Airbus A320 just a few minutes after the WestJet flight spotted it. "I can see the drone," a pilot can be heard telling air traffic controllers in another recording.

The scrambled fighter jets were not able to locate the drone when they arrived and the jets returned to CFB Bagotville, according to DND. The RCMP is investigating. Transport Canada files report. On June 6, nearly two weeks after the incident, Transport Canada filed a report about the sightings of a "large drone" near the flight paths of the two planes. The report says the WestJet pilots spotted the drone on the plane's left side at the same altitude of the plane, about 6,700 feet. The Air Canada flight was flying at 8,000 feet when its pilots spotted the drone about 1.8 kilometres to its left, flying about 2,000 feet below the plane's altitude.

The drone headed to the southeast at 37 to 55 kph on radar and was lost at about 1655hrs ET, the report states. Residents in Ottawa who heard the CF-18 fighters wondered about their presence on social media.

## **Legion's \$10 Fee for Veterans to Join PTSD Support Group**

DAVID PUGLIESE, OTTAWA CITIZEN | June 11, 2016



*Canadian soldiers carry a wounded comrade in Afghanistan in 2006. Royal Canadian Legion members are raising concerns over a new legion program for injured veterans.*

*John Moore / Getty Images*

The Canadian Forces is distancing itself from a Royal Canadian Legion initiative to charge those suffering from post-traumatic stress and other related illnesses a \$10 fee to join a support group. The legion's new group has the same acronym as the one operated by the Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence, with the support of Veterans Affairs. But that's where the similarities stop. The military's system, Operational Stress Injury Social Support has an extensive network of support groups across the country. OSISS and the military's operational stress injury clinics offer a wide range of services. OSISS is free to military personnel, veterans and their families.

The legion's new Operational Stress Injury Special Section, also known as OSISS, offers to direct veterans and their families to existing services, such as the Canadian Forces network. But veterans suffering from mental issues and post-traumatic stress, as well as their family members, each would have to pay a \$10 administrative fee to join the section. Canadian Forces spokeswoman navy Lt Michèle Tremblay said the legion's OSISS is not related to the DND and Veterans Affairs system. "There is no charge for (Canadian Forces) members or veterans to be part of (our) OSISS," she said. Glynne Hines, interim president of the legion's OSISS, did not respond to requests from the Citizen to explain the reasoning behind the fee. He also did not respond to questions about whether the legion's decision to use the same acronym as the government program would lead to confusion. Hines would not address the question of whether the fee is to cover the cost of travel, conferences, per diems and hotels for executive members of the section. Other legion members are questioning the fee, noting the organization has millions of dollars in the bank and already has service officers to help veterans at no cost. Craig Hood, who is nominated as the interim first vice-president of the legion's OSISS, has said on social media the initiative is being rolled out this weekend at the legion's convention in St John's. Those who join the section will receive a special pin. But most of the section's work will be done online.

The Canadian Forces and DND were not consulted on the legion's initiative, defence officials said. A DND official said the military and department have been trying to get answers about the

legion's OSISS initiative but the legion is not responding. Dominion President Tom Eagles of the legion has said his organization's initiative is about "maintaining a close working relationship with the Department of National Defence and Veterans Affairs."

According to the legion, its OSISS will "reach out and assist veterans and their families" and promote public awareness of stress injuries. "The OSI Special Section WILL NOT deliver health services," it said in its promotional material.

Asked whether the Canadian Forces or DND endorsed the legion's OSISS, Tremblay said, "We would not comment on a third party organization's initiative." The unveiling of the legion's OSISS this weekend comes as some convention delegates are pushing for more financial accountability. Some legion members had hoped to use the convention to force Dominion Command, the legion's administrative organization, to reveal details about executives paid more than \$100,000 a year. Members also want to find out about the cost of travel and expenses for executives, spouses and families. That effort has been shot down. Legion executives say the privacy of executives would be violated by such disclosure. Lorne Tyson, a member from Winnipeg who has been advocating for increased accountability was told the matter cannot be discussed or even raised in St John's.

*Note - this action comes after the Legion donated \$200,000 to the Ft McMurray fire victims – certainly a worthwhile cause - but poppy funds are collected for the express purpose of assisting veterans.*

## **What Happened to the French Undersea Cruiser Surcouf**

by [Joris Nieuwint](#) - Aug 28, 2015



Surcouf was a French submarine ordered to be built in December 1927, launched on 18 October 1929, and commissioned in May 1934. Surcouf – named after the French privateer Robert Surcouf – was the largest submarine ever built until surpassed by the first Japanese

I-400-class submarine in 1943. Her short wartime career was marked with controversy and conspiracy theories. She was classified as an "undersea cruiser" by sources of her time. Soon after Surcouf was launched, the London Naval Treaty finally placed restrictions on submarine designs. Among other things, each signatory (France included) was permitted to possess no more than three large submarines, each not exceeding 2,800 long tons standard displacement, with guns not exceeding 6.1 inch in caliber. Surcouf, which would have exceeded these limits, was specially exempt from the rules at the insistence of Navy Minister Georges Leygues, but other 'big-gun' submarines of her class could no longer be built. In 1940, Surcouf was based in

Cherbourg, but in May, when the Germans invaded, she was being refitted in Brest. With only one engine functioning and with a jammed rudder, she limped across the English Channel and sought refuge in Plymouth.

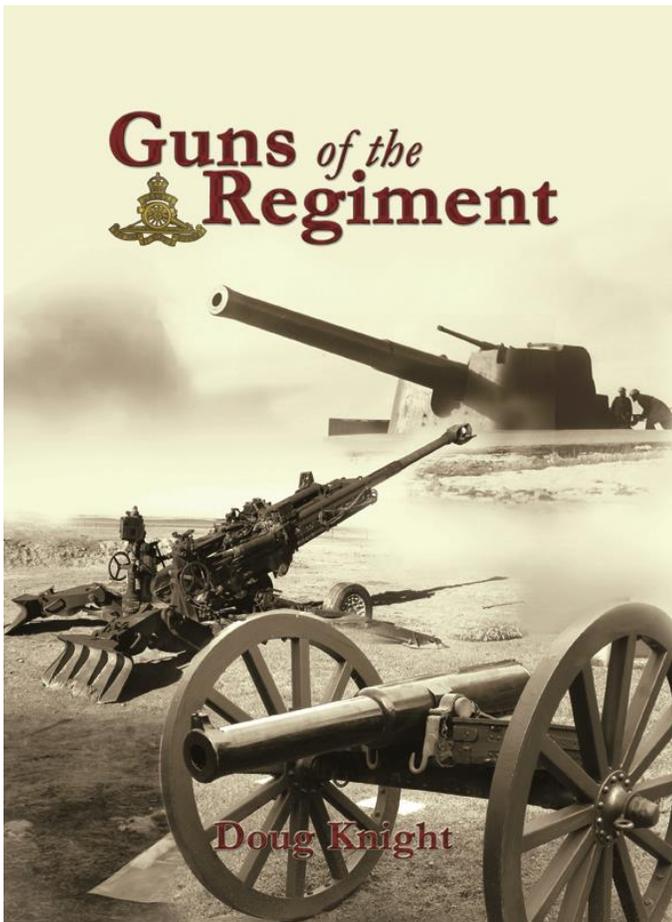
On 3 July, the British, concerned that the French Fleet would be taken over by the German Kriegsmarine at the French armistice, executed Operation Catapult. French ships lying at ports in Britain and Canada were also boarded by armed marines, sailors and soldiers, and the only serious incident took place at Plymouth aboard *Surcouf*, when two Royal Navy submarine officers, Cdr Denis 'Lofty' Sprague, captain of HMS *Thames* and Lt Griffiths of HMS *Rorqual*, and French warrant officer mechanic Yves Daniel were fatally wounded, and a British seaman, LS Webb was shot dead by the submarine's doctor. The acrimony between the British and French caused by these actions escalated when the British attempted to repatriate the captured French sailors: the British hospital ship that was carrying them back to France was sunk by the Germans, and many of the French blamed the British for the deaths.

By August 1940, the British completed *Surcouf*'s refit and turned her over to the Free French Navy for convoy patrol. The only officer not repatriated from the original crew, Capitaine de Frégate (Commander) Georges Louis Blaison, became the new commanding officer. Because of the British-French tensions with regard to the submarine, accusations were made by each side that the other was spying for Vichy France; the British also claimed that *Surcouf* was attacking British ships. Later, a British officer and two sailors were put on board for "liaison" purposes. One real drawback of this submarine was that it required a crew of 110–130 men, which represented three crews of more conventional submarines. *Surcouf* then went to the Canadian base at Halifax, Nova Scotia and escorted trans-Atlantic convoys. In April 1941, she was damaged by a German plane at Devonport. On 28 July, *Surcouf* went to the United States Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth, New Hampshire for a three-month refit. The US was technically violating its neutrality as the US had diplomatic relations with Vichy France at the time and did not recognize Free France. After leaving the shipyard, *Surcouf* went to New London, Connecticut, presumably to receive additional training for her crew. *Surcouf* left New London on 27 November to return to Halifax.

In January 1942, the Free French decided to send *Surcouf* to the Pacific theatre of war, after she re-supplied at Bermuda. Her movement south triggered rumours that she was going to liberate Martinique for the Free French from Vichy. After the outbreak of war with Japan, *Surcouf* was ordered to Sydney, Australia via Tahiti. She departed Halifax on 2 February for Bermuda, which she left on 12 February, bound for the Panama Canal. *Surcouf* may have been sunk on 18 February 1942 about 80 miles north of Cristóbal, Colón, while en route for Tahiti via the Panama Canal. The American freighter *Thompson Lykes*, steaming alone from Guantanamo Bay on what was a very dark night, reported hitting and running down a partially submerged object which scraped along her side and keel. Her lookouts heard people in the water but the freighter carried on its course without stopping, as they thought that they had struck a German U-boat, though cries for help were heard in English. A signal was sent to Panama describing the

incident. The loss of Surcouf was announced by the Free French Headquarters in London on 18 April 1942. There is a memorial to Surcouf in Cherbourg harbor.

## "Guns of the Regiment"



Doug Knight, a good friend of our Association and Museum, has produced a book on the guns of the Canadian Artillery. 425pp, illustrated throughout.

Since Confederation, the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery has used more than 130 types of gun, howitzer, mortar, and rocket. Each gun was purchased or manufactured to fill a role in the defence of Canada, or in support of Canadian foreign policy. It then served with the Regiment, and was modified, modernized, or upgraded as necessary. Finally, it was transferred into the reserves, and later, a few retired in museums or as monuments.

*"Guns of the Regiment"* will be an invaluable resource to anyone with an interest in the weapons used by the Canadian artillery. Each gun has its own section, detailing its development and its career in the Regiment at home and overseas. Special sections deal with

the manufacture of the guns, the organization and operation of the Regiment, and the mechanization of the artillery in the 1930s. Every gun is illustrated by at least one photograph, many of which have never been previously published. Retail price - CDN \$79.95

**Pre-Order - for shipping on 3 July go to: <http://www.servicepub.com/>**

## Who is it?



**Last Week:** This picture is of Eric Tyldesley Gore, who was RSM at the time, taken in Ft Lewis, WA. He is wearing one of the many iterations of the uniform called Workdress in those days. It also had a number of other less flattering names. He is wearing a version of summer dress here – zip up jacket removed, shirt sleeves rolled, name tag affixed to the right pocket flap, pants bloused over combat boots. I could fill the whole newsletter trying to summarize all the various modifications this uniform went through before finally disappearing. The Green Service Dress, used for parades, had to be dry cleaned and wasn't suitable for training. Combat clothing of that period was very expensive and didn't stand up well to daily use, so Workdress was introduced as a practical alternative. Eric retired as a Captain and now lives in Vernon. BC

**This Week:** And now, we change to a more nautical theme for this week's ancient photo. It comes, as do many, from the vaults of the late Vic Stevenson. We are not sure if he actually took this shot, as it is a large 120 slide, and most of his photos, after 1950, were 35mm. Nonetheless, the size gives a clarity and detail that the smaller format often lacks.



Here we have a grand vessel. It certainly isn't the False Creek Ferry, although after various governments reduced the Royal Canadian Navy to its current state, parts of it might, indeed, be incorporated into smaller civilian boats and ships. I once met a self-proclaimed expert who declared that the mighty Bonaventure, our last and much-lamented aircraft carrier, ended up as Datsun 510s. He obviously was not in the loop, as my qualified informant states that it was Toyota Corollas.

In any case, we would like to appeal to you nautical types out there in order to identify the vessel in the photo and give us an approximate date. We know

the photo was taken before 1965, due to the use of the two pre-maple leaf ensigns. It is also guessed that the date is sometime after forage caps came into general use in the Reserve Army, as all the lads standing around the turret seem to be wearing such. Therefore, is it around the late 50s or early 60s? So, jolly Jack Tars (and others), please send your responses to the esteemed editor of this great newsletter, or to the author, John Redmond ([johnd.\\_redmond@telus.net](mailto:johnd._redmond@telus.net)). Happy sailing!

### **From the 'Punitentary'**

Why does a chicken coup have two doors? If it had four, it would be a chicken sedan.

### **Murphy's other Laws**

When there are two possible outcomes to an event, only the undesired one will occur.

### **Quotable Quotes**

The universe seems neither benign nor hostile, merely indifferent. *Carl Sagan*

# FUNDRAISER

**Please help John Horton return his boat,  
the Steveston Lifeboat, to volunteer service!**



The Vancouver Maritime Museum, *BC Shipping News* and The Canadian Fishing Company are hosting this event to assist famed lifeboat commander and marine artist, John Horton. For 36 years John has volunteered his *Steveston Lifeboat* into SAR and prevention service, but in December 2014 it was involved in an unfortunate training accident, requiring a major refit. John's support of the marine industry is legendary, but now he needs help to complete the repair as his financial resources have run out.

The evening will feature some of John's art in the silent auction. He will also present a brief version of his highly popular illustrated talk on Captain Vancouver's Voyage of Discovery of this coast.

*Please come and support John.*

**Where** Vancouver Maritime Museum  
1905 Ogden Ave, Vancouver,  
BC V6J 1A3 (604 257-8300)

**When** Wednesday, 15 June, 2016

**Time** 5pm to 8pm

**Entry by donation**  
**Distinguished Guest Speaker**  
**Fundraising Goal: \$40,000**  
**Silent Auction**  
**Light Refreshments**

*If you are able to donate funds  
or an item for the silent auction  
or for any questions, please contact:  
Mary Horton at [mary@johnhorton.ca](mailto:mary@johnhorton.ca)  
or at 604 943-4399.*