



Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News July 30, 2019

Newsletters normally are emailed on Monday evenings. If you don't get a future newsletter on time, check the websites below to see if there is a notice about the current newsletter or to see if the current edition is posted there. If the newsletter is posted, please contact me at bob.mugford@gmail.com to let me know you didn't get a copy.

Newsletter on line. This newsletter, and previous editions, are available on the Vancouver Artillery Association website at: 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 - We need your support to keep the lunches going. Hope all you regular attendees can keep coming. The Mess serves a great 5 course buffet meal for only \$20. Hope to see you all there. Guests are always welcome, and we encourage members to bring their significant others and friends. Dress - Jacket and tie, equivalent for Ladies. For serving personnel, uniform of the day is always acceptable at lunch.

NOTE: There will not be a lunch on Sept 11. Mrs Lum will be out of town.

Upcoming events – Mark your calendars See attached posters for details.

Sept 11 NO LUNCH - mark your calendars! Mrs Lum away.

Sept 28 RUSI Vancouver Inaugural Annual Dinner

World War 2 – 1944

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

Jul 31st: 4th US Armored Division leaps off from Avranches to cross the Selune River, while the Fallschirmjager continue to obstruct VII and XIX Corps. 1st Belorussian Front is less than 20 km from Warsaw while 3rd Belorussian Front takes Kaunas. American troops go over onto the attack at Aitape. The last organized Japanese resistance on Tinian is confined to the south of the Island.

August 1944: Paris Redeemed

"Attended thanksgiving service...for liberation of Paris...hearing the Marseillaise gave me a great thrill. France seemed to wake again after being knocked out for five years." - General Sir Alan Brooke - 28th August 1944

General: This is a month when strategic bombers are hitting tactical targets and tactical bombers are hitting strategic targets – Allied airpower ranges all over Western Europe; 8th and 15th US Air Forces drop 75,000 tons of bombs while Bomber Command drops 65,000 tons and tactical air forces fly 75,800 sorties. 8th Air Force bombers start running shuttle missions, using Soviet and Italian bases while Bomber Command even launches some daylight raids over Germany. German V-Weapons cause 4,000 casualties in Britain. Superfortress raids on Japan continue to grow in size.

Aug 1st: HQs in Normandy are shuffled with Bradley becoming commander of 12th Army Group with Patton leading 3rd US Army and Hodges leading 1st US Army while Dempsey's 2nd UK Army and Crerar's 1st Canadian Army constitute Montgomery's 21st Army Group. Finland has a new president as Marshal Mannerheim replaces Ryti. Manuel Quezon, President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, dies of tuberculosis in New York, aged 66. Tinian is secure but killing 6,000 Japanese and capturing 250 costs the US 390 dead and 1,800 wounded. The Soviets are advancing nicely (with 3rd Byelorussian Front cutting off most of the routes to the Baltic States) but the Red Army comes to a crashing halt as soon as the Polish Home Army stages a rising in Warsaw. The Poles have about 37,000 poorly armed members of the Home Army around Warsaw, the German garrison numbers about 11,000 soldiers.

Aug 2nd: VIII Corps (of Patton's 3rd Army) stomps into Brittany, reaching the outskirts of Dinan and Rennes, while 1st US Army starts moving forward towards Mortain. Two other US Corps are formed in Normandy, XV Corps under Wade Haislip, and XX Corps under Walton Walker. American troops make good progress on the western side of Guam and go nowhere on the eastern side. The last of some 20,000 Gypsies sent to Auschwitz are gassed and cremated. On the orders of Himmler, Stefan Pawel Rowecki, one of the main leaders of the Polish Home Army, is executed at Sachsenhausen. He had refused to surrender in October 1939 and had been one of the Home Army's most able leaders over the last five years. He is posthumously named to the Order of the White Eagle, Poland's highest honor.

Aug 3rd: The last Japanese leave Myitkynia in Northern Burma, having imposed a long delay on Chinese and American forces. The Soviets cross the Vistula 180km south of Warsaw. The Japanese on Guam start to pull in their front line to concentrate in a defence of Mount Santa Rosa. US VIII Corps begins the assault on Rennes, while Mortain falls to elements of 1st US Army. Lt Gen Brian Horrocks takes over command of XXX Corps in Normandy.

Aug 4th: US warships hit Iwo and Chichi Jima and sink a Japanese destroyer. South African troops liberate the southern half of Florence but can't cross the Arno. The Germans in Brittany withdraw into their fortifications around St Malo, Brest, Lorient and St Nazaire (the last two will stay in German hands until VE-Day). Rennes is liberated while British take Villers Bocage. German counterattacks in Baltic reopen communications to Riga from Prussia. Ann Frank and her family are arrested in Amsterdam – she, her sister, and her mother will die, her father will survive. The first Allied airdrops begin over Warsaw, but as the Soviets refuse to allow the use of their airspace, very little material can be delivered and 12% of the aircraft sent on these missions will be lost. While leading a daylight raid on German positions near Trossy St

Maximin, France, RAF 635 Squadron is being led by their Canadian Squadron Leader Ian W Bazalgette. His Lancaster came in for special attention from German flak. Despite losing both starboard engines and having his aircraft set on fire, Bazalgette marked his target accurately for the squadron attack, then flew over Allied lines to allow most of his crew to bail out. As two were too wounded to jump, he attempted to land the aircraft but all three died when the aircraft blew up. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

Essential Reading: Mass murder stupefies the senses and deaths in the hundreds or thousands per day make for statistics rather than a tragedy – unless one can learn of the individuals who died in detail. Anne Frank was a bright, alert young teenage girl, living in hiding for two years, before her family was found and fed into the maw of the Holocaust. Her personality and spirit are vivid in her diary and put a human face on at least one of the doomed. Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl was prepared by her father from the journal she kept while in hiding.

Aug 5th: The Soviets activate the 4th Ukrainian Front in the Carpathian Mountains. In Normandy Vannes is liberated, and US troops reach the outskirts of St Malo and Brest, other American formations are hurrying beyond Mortain. SS troops under the command of Bronislaw Kaminski (a renegade Russian) and Oskar Dirlewanger (a notoriously criminal SS officer) start to massacre tens of thousands of Polish civilians in the Warsaw neighbourhoods of Wola and Ochota. Courage usually implies a nobility of spirit, but monsters can be brave too. Oskar Dirlewanger was a well decorated veteran of the First World War, having received both the Iron Cross 2nd Class and 1st Class as well as ten wounds during his years in the trenches. After the war, he fought in the Freikorps, earned a doctorate in political science and became an early member of the Nazi Party – then he raped a 13-year-old girl and got in an accident while drunk behind the wheel. His party connections got him reinstated and eventually the command of an SS Battalion specifically recruited for anti-Partisan duties. The battalion, later expanded to a brigade, attracted men well suited to Dirlewanger's own reputation and they became notorious for rape, looting, torture and mass-murder. He ended up in French captivity with the German surrender. The French took pains to give Dirlewanger an escort of Polish troops when he was transferred to a prison inside Germany and rough but well-merited impromptu justice was then served en route.

Aug 6th: On Hitler's orders, Kluge moves what is left of his badly depleted Panzer Divisions from opposite Montgomery towards Avranches from which American corps are exploding in all directions – nearing Le Mans and Lorient while capturing Laval and Vire. There is a fierce Japanese counterattack on Guam against the 77th US Division. The Arno is crossed, and Allied troops liberate the rest of Florence. When elements of the 10th SS Panzer Division attacked the 1st Battalion of the Royal Norfolks near Sourdeval, France, Corporal Sidney Bates seized a Bren gun and singlehandedly forced the Germans out of his position, charging them despite receiving two wounds. When he sustained his third (and mortal) wound, the Germans were in full retreat. Corporal Bates received a posthumous award of the Victoria Cross.

The Marine Corps' New Robotic Targets

They look, move, and even shout just like real humans.

Hope Hodge Seck Military.com 22 Jul 2019



Lifelike robotic targets made by Marathon line up in formation at a military training range.

Photo courtesy of Ralph Petroff/Marathon Targets

At 2nd Marine Division in North Carolina, troops who have spent their careers shooting at static bull's-eyes on paper are being forced to adapt to a new kind of target -- one that can charge at them, move in unexpected directions, respond when engaged and even shout at them in a foreign language. The division is the first operational unit in the military to employ autonomous Marathon targets: humanoid figures on four-wheeled platforms that can be programmed to operate in concert and are fast and unpredictable enough to rock the most experienced marksmen back on their heels. The targets have been a subject of experimentation within the Marine Corps for several years. The Marine Corps Warfighting Lab, out of Quantico, Virginia, had taken point on experimentation with the systems, and in 2018 then-Commandant Gen Robert Neller commissioned a study on how the targets could improve Marines' skills and training quality. But officials at 2nd Marine Division were not content to wait until a service-wide decision was made on how to use the robots. When Marine Corps budgets became constrained at the end of last fiscal year due to storm repair and other costs, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Joshua Smith, division gunner for 2nd Marine Division, said he stepped in to save the experimentation effort.

Lance Cpl Levi Burton with 2nd Law Enforcement Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group, fires a 12-gauge shotgun during a live-fire range, testing a new autonomous robotic target system at Camp Lejeune, NC, on June 26, 2018. The Marines used the targets to further develop their marksmanship skills, anticipate natural movement and increase combat effectiveness.

(US Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl Tanner Seims)



"When I first approached 2nd Marine Division Commanding Gen, Maj Gen David Furness and told him the Marine Corps could not fiscally afford to keep these targets for the next year, he immediately responded, 'Find a way to get the money; I want these targets for the division,'" Smith told Military.com. The division ended up leasing 16 targets for a total cost of \$2.1

million. That may sound steep compared to traditional static targets, but Smith notes having targets that move means he can modernize or alter any range cheaply in the space of an hour. The Marine Corps, Smith said, recently abandoned a plan to convert all its rifle ranges from yards to meters -- an effort that would allow Marines to operate more easily with other services and other nations' militaries -- because of the towering cost, estimated at \$1 million per berm. "How do you do that on the cheap? You move the target," he said. "You don't move the berm." Smith said he's now finding range configuration limited only by his own imagination. And the same, he said, is true for employment of the targets, which not only test marksmanship skills through evasive, human-like maneuvering, but also make a convincing enemy force that can leave troops dry-mouthed when they charge a shooter at 10 miles per hour. He said the Marine Corps-commissioned study found the targets could increase individual marksmanship effectiveness on a moving target dramatically over the course of just one day. "A Marine went anywhere from a 20-30% hit rate on a moving target to 80-90%," Smith said. "Imagine, if I can do reps and sets like that all the time, how I could increase lethality at the individual level."

A primary objective for Smith this year is the collection of more data: usage rates and statistics demonstrating increases in lethality across 2nd Marine Division. "We're trying to show that these are a valuable target to us," he said. They're already wildly popular, with wait lists for division units to use them. Smith said units preparing to deploy get priority; others get in line. He has brought out the targets for unit events such as the 2nd MarDiv squad competition in June and July, where a group of targets simulated an enemy patrol. A Marine Corps squad ambushed the simulated enemy with an M18 claymore mine, then fired on the robots when they scattered in a realistic human response to the attack. "When we first leased them, it was sort of little-known that we had these targets. When I got Marines in front of them, that's when the usage rates went up," Smith said. " ... Marines are asking why aren't these on every range?" Among his future plans is a live-fire range in which the targets work their way inside an infantry unit's perimeter, putting human troops on the defensive. Having 16 of the humanoid targets means a rifle squad can be matched or even outnumbered by a yelling, advancing simulated enemy. "As we get out of the [Iraq/Afghanistan] conflicts, what that was, we always outnumbered our enemy," Smith said. "Now, as the [Defense Department] starts to look at peer-versus-peer, we try to give that to the Marines now. A rifle squad is fighting a rifle squad. A fire team is fighting a fire team."

It's not just the ground-pounders who can benefit from the targets, though. Smith said amphibious assault vehicle crewmen have fired on the targets using their guns, and tanks have been able to train their 7.62mm coaxial machine guns on them. "Some of the stuff we would like to see in the future is the ability to incorporate some of our higher-caliber munitions," he said. "Right now, we're up to 7.62 and some of the smaller fragmentation [rounds]. We would love to incorporate mortars. ... Those are some of the things we have been looking at." Smith said he's also thinking about how to rig the targets to "shoot back" at human troops, possibly by incorporating the Instrumented Tactical Engagement Simulation System, or ITESS, essentially a high-tech version of laser tag. Marine Corps-wide, Smith said he'd like to see eight to 16 of the targets fielded to each infantry battalion. But whether or not the service springs for the technology, he's confident his Marines will be able to keep training with them. "This is going to

be up to [Headquarters Marine Corps] for them to find the budget," he said. "Within 2nd Marine Division, we're going to watch this very closely and see what the institution does. If it doesn't go the way we would like it to go, I will tell you with confidence that Gen Furness will give me guidance to find said money and keep these targets within the division."

Meet the M1299

The new Army howitzer with twice the range of the M109 Paladin

Jared Keller Military Tech July 24, 2019

The future of Army long-range precision officially has a name. The Army confirmed on Monday that it plans on designating the Extended Range Cannon Artillery (ERCA) program's brand new 155mm self-propelled howitzer as the M1299, Army Recognition reports. Developed in response to increasing concerns of near-peer adversaries like Russia and China, the ERCA gun nailed targets with pinpoint accuracy at a range of 62 kilometers during testing at the Yuma Proving Ground in Arizona in March, far outstripping the range of both the M109A7 Paladin (30km) and M777 (40km with the M982 Excalibur guided artillery shell) howitzers. Compared to those systems, the M1299 will receive two "leading-edge technologies," as Army Recognition reports: the experimental new XM1113 rocket-assisted artillery shell, and a longer 58 caliber tube and a larger chamber designed to boost the conventional howitzer range from 38km to 70km and, eventually, an eye-popping 100 km "within the forthcoming four years."



Extended Range Cannon Artillery, or ERCA, will be an improvement to the latest version of the Paladin self-propelled howitzer that provides indirect fires for the brigade combat team and division-level fight (US Army photo)

"We know we need the range in order to maintain overmatch," Col John Rafferty, head of the long-range precision fire cross-functional team, told Defense News. "We need 70 to 80 kilometers because that's the start, and then we will be able to get farther. Right now, we are on a path to 70 kilometers with ERCA." Extended range is only one element of the Army's never-ending pursuit of lethality. The M1299 will incorporate a fully automated ammo loading system to boost the howitzer's rate of fire from 3 rpm to 10 rpm, although Defense News reported in March that the Army doesn't plan on fully incorporating the system "beyond the first iteration" until 2024. Soldier may not need to wait that long to get their hands on the ERCA program's new tech, though: the official M1299 designation comes just weeks after the Army awarded a \$45 million contract to BAE Systems to integrate various elements of the ERCA system into the service's existing and future Paladin howitzers.

Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

Here's the latest activities from the website of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment RCA family.

Uploaded sixty photos to the Canada Day page from the Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment. Great job! <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/canada-day-2019.html>

Keep those stories, calendar events and pictures coming! president.vcrgunners@gmail.com

VIA Rail Discount for Veterans

VIA is offering a 40% off the best available fares in Sleeper Plus class onboard the Canadian (Toronto-Vancouver train) —for qualifying members of the Canadian Armed Forces, National Defence civilian personnel, veterans, and their immediate families. The offer ends on September 23, 2019. For details see:- <https://www.viarail.ca/en/canadian-forces>

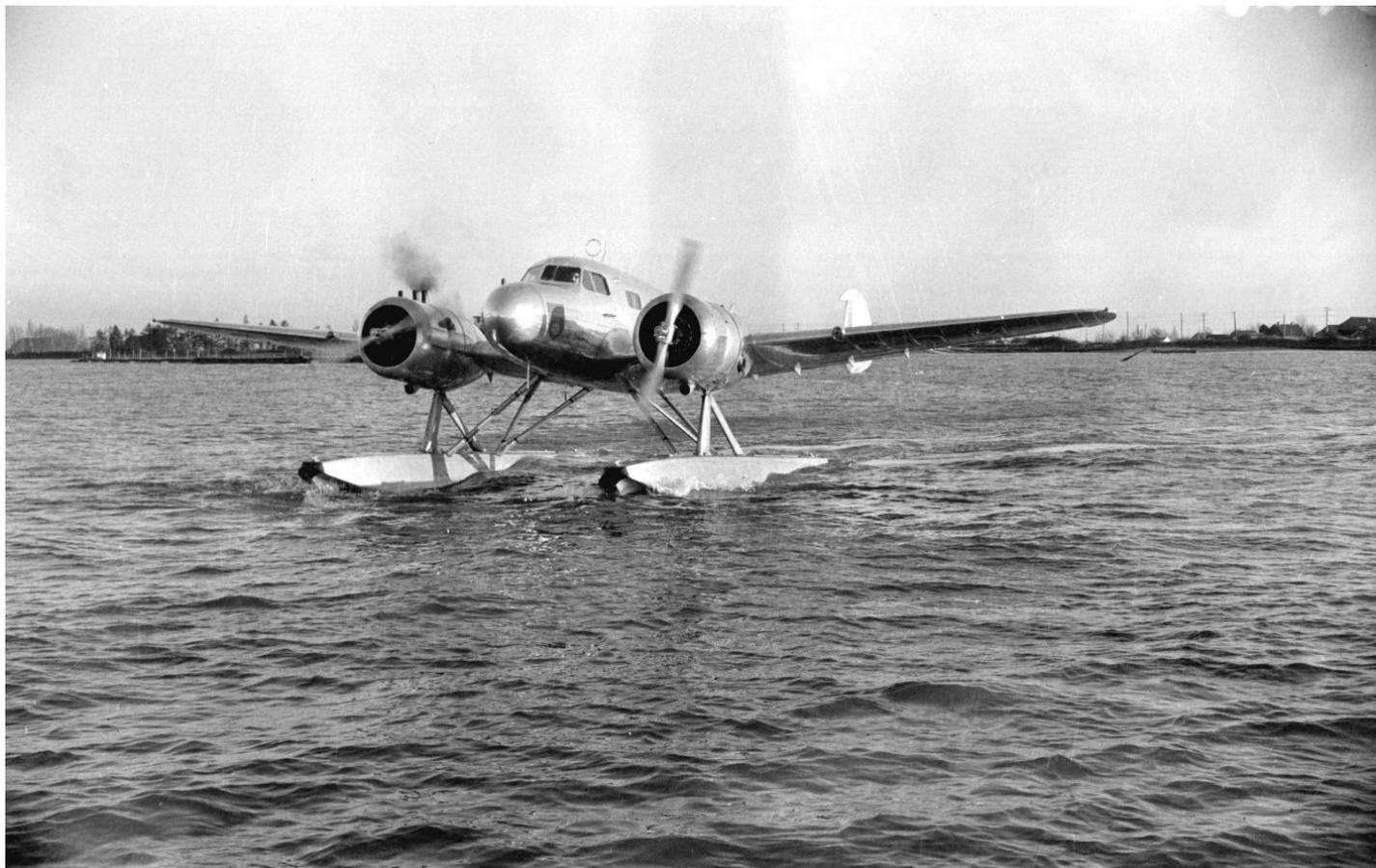
Who (or What) Is It?



Last Week: Members of the Irish Fusiliers (Vancouver Regiment) of Canada trying out their 'new' Bofors AA guns shortly after being converted from Infantry to Artillery in 1946, when they became the 65 LAA Regt RCA. We believe the picture was taken in the old Horseshow building on Georgia Street. No one was able to identify the people in the picture.

This Week: Up, up in the air for this week's photo, which was sent to us by an enthusiastic young (as are all) reader of this column. It is, of course, a hydroplane, a class of flying machine seen daily, if not hourly, on the West Coast of our great Dominion. However, this one is a bit of a rare bird, and an attractive one, too. As you know, at the beginning of the Second World War, the Royal Canadian Air Force was equipped on a par with the Grand Duchy of Lower

Leutonia, thanks to the usual government neglect, compounded by the Great Depression. As a result, a great scramble started when the Fuhrer unleashed his campaign of hatred. Just about anything that could fly, as well as some things that couldn't, were pressed into service. Hence, Halifax found itself defended (sort of) by rather portly Curtiss Clevelands. Their effect on any Luftwaffe ace can only be imagined (as the Germans never managed to find our Halifax, being fooled by a similarly named one in the UK).



This aerial oddity is one of those pressed aircraft, but what is it, and where did it fly? Did it actually serve in the RCAF? Did Biggles ever take the controls of one? Send your musings to the editor, Bob “Ace” Mugford (bob.mugford@outlook.com), or to his wingman, John “Wingy” Redmond (johnd._redmond@telus.net). I say! Hun in the sun! Pranged my crate.

From the ‘Punitary’

How much did the butcher charge for his venison? A buck!

Murphy’s Other Laws

When in doubt, empty the magazine.

Quotable Quotes

All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding on. - *Havelock Ellis*



*The President
and the Directors
of*

Royal United Services Institute Vancouver Society

request the pleasure of the company of you and your guests

at our

Inaugural Annual Dinner

*Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of D-Day
and the 30th anniversary of our 'Royal' Designation*

to be held at

*BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY
2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver, BC*

on

Saturday, the Twenty-Eighth of September 2019

at

six thirty for seven o'clock in the evening

RSVP by 18 September 2019
to RSVP@rusivancouver.ca

Send payment to:
Treasurer, RUSI Vancouver
2025 West 11th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 3C7

Dress: Business Formal (Mess Dress Optional)

Tariff: \$50 per person
Make cheques payable to: RUSI Vancouver

Menu: Chicken Cordon Bleu or Vegetarian – please indicate choice on RSVP