



## Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News Aug 27, 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](mailto: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](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** - 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 20** 15<sup>th</sup> Fd Regt and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser's Highlanders whiskey tasting

**Sept 28** RUSI Vancouver Inaugural Annual Dinner

## World War 2 – 1944

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

**Aug 28<sup>th</sup>:** 1<sup>st</sup> French Army completes the liberation of Toulon and Marseilles while some Germans (led by 11<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division) run a gauntlet of Allied air and artillery at Montelimar as they pull back north. In Northern France, 1<sup>st</sup> US Army crosses the Marne at Meaux. General Lakatos forms a new government in Hungary and announces a readiness to negotiate with the Soviets. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ukrainian Front spills over Oituz Pass in the Carpathians and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ukrainian Front takes Braila in the Danube valley.

**Aug 29<sup>th</sup>:** The Slovak Rising begins. The Soviets announce that they have amassed evidence of 1,500,000 deaths at Majdanek, after sifting through the records they found when the camp was captured in July. The Allies recognize Polish Home Army as a responsible belligerent force and demand the Germans do likewise – while ferocious fighting continues inside Warsaw. The Soviets announce they won't accept Bulgarian neutrality and invade; meanwhile they take the

Romanian port of Constansa. In Italy, 8<sup>th</sup> Army reaches the Foglia River and starts planning to advance to the Gothic Line. In France, American troops liberate Soissons, Reims and Chalons-sur-Marne.

**Aug 30<sup>th</sup>:** De Gaulle forms a Provisional Government in Paris. British XXX Corps accelerates its advance towards Belgium; taking Beauvais as they go. The Soviets take Polesti, exacerbating Germany's critical fuel shortage – Hitler only has his synthetic fuel plants now and the Allied bomber fleets keep hitting them. In Italy, I Canadian and V British Corps start attacking the Gothic Line.

**Aug 31<sup>st</sup>:** American carriers raid Iwo Jima. Troops from 2<sup>nd</sup> Ukrainian Front enter Bucharest. In Italy, 8<sup>th</sup> Army punches more holes in the Gothic Line and US IV Corps pushes north from the Arno. The Germans have never been short of brilliant Panzer leaders and perhaps the best of their division commanders had been General der Panzertruppe Hermann Balck, whose defence of the Chir River as the commander of 11<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division in December 1942 was outstanding. Balck's performance as a corps commander has been less stellar, but Germany's panzers have been out massed on all fronts since 1943. Regardless, today Balck becomes one of 27 German servicemen to have the entire set of Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds appended to his Knights Cross.

**Sept 1944: Easy Prospects in Europe Vanish** *“We were extremely surprised to find that the full Gross Deutschland Division was still quite strong – a discovery that raised our morale considerably. We needed to cling to some form of solidity to avoid recognition of the final tragedy which engulfed us, and of our strictly limited choice between combat in the most desperate circumstances, captivity, or the end, once and for all.”* -Guy Sajer, back in Poland in Sept 1944, in “The Forgotten Soldier”

**General:** Altogether, Allied heavy bombers drop 112,400 tons of bombs on Germany and occupied Europe. B-29s in China start hitting targets in Manchuria. The Manhattan Project has progressed far enough to start training a special bomber unit to deliver its planned bombs.

**Sept 1<sup>st</sup>:** German aviation fuel production is down to 10,000 tons a month, from 156,000 tons in May. 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Division liberates Dieppe (the site of its disastrous raid in 1942); British troops liberate Arras while 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army liberates Verdun and Commercy. Montgomery and Eisenhower are arguing about what to do next – Montgomery wants a narrow punch to penetrate towards the Rhine or across it; Eisenhower is more concerned about logistics and maintaining a broad front to avoid giving the Germans opportunities for grand maneuvers. The Soviets reach the Bulgarian frontier as Prime Minister Bagrianov resigns in favour of Constantine Muraviev. Since the start of the War, Poland has had no shortage of heroes, but she loses yet another one today. The young poet Józef Szczepański is a member of the Polish Home Army in Warsaw and a stalwart spirit in its famed Parasol Battalion (one of the more celebrated units in the Resistance). He had been active in the Underground movement since 1939, particularly by his continued membership in the Boy Scouts, which had been promptly banned by the Nazis and so gone underground, then with his verses. He is mortally wounded in the

fighting in Warsaw today but gains glory with the award of *Virtuti Militari*, the highest Polish military award for courage.

**Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Douai, St Valery and Lens are liberated but Allied supply problems in France are becoming acute; the Germans have demolished all port facilities that they can, the rail net is in tatters, and the truck convoys from Normandy are consuming more fuel than they deliver to the frontline troops. The Finns break diplomatic relations with Germany and demand that all German troops leave. The eastern end of the Gothic line in Italy is completely breached by British, Canadian and Polish troops of the 8<sup>th</sup> Army – with a particularly spectacular performance near Cattolica by the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Corps. The 117<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Squadron of the US Army has encountered the 11<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division at Montreval, France, and the meeting engagement is not turning out well. 2Lt Daniel W Lee takes a patrol forward to attack a pair of German mortars that have been causing trouble, and gets his leg broken by a burst from a submachine gun. However, he crawls forward and kills most of the crew of the mortars, getting the rest to flee. Then he is fired on by a German armoured car, finds a German panzerfaust, crawls to within range of the vehicle and damages it, forcing its withdrawal. He then collapses from his wounds but will receive the Medal of Honor.

**Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Brussels is liberated by XXX Corps, as Tournai, Abbeville and Mons are also liberated by other hard-driving British and American formations – Patton crosses the Moselle too. Three USN heavy cruisers bombard Wake Island. Randolph Churchill (Winston's son) arranges the evacuation of 650 German and Austrian Jews from Partisan-held areas in Yugoslavia to Italy. Since entering combat in Normandy on June 14<sup>th</sup>, Captain Mark Urban has accumulated five citations for Silver and Bronze stars and one for the Croix de Guerre and has earned six Purple Hearts. Yet twice he has returned without authorization from hospitals to his battalion in the 9<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division to lead his company in battle again. Today, at his unit's fiercely contested crossing of the Meuse River near Heer Belgium, he takes the lead once more. Shot in the neck, and barely able to speak above a whisper, he refuses evacuation until the objective is taken and secured. He is awarded the Medal of Honor to go with his seventh Purple Heart.

## **US Soldiers Getting Army's New 7.62mm Squad Marksman Rifle**

Coming as early as next year. *Matthew Cox, Military.com July 13, 2019*



Heckler & Koch Defense Inc. will soon begin delivering thousands of 7.62mm squad-designated marksman rifles to the Army to give infantry and other close-combat units a better chance of penetrating enemy body armor. H&K will deliver "between 5,000 and 6,000" variants of the G28 rifle,

which the Army plans to issue as its new squad designated marksman rifle (SDMR), according to a July 12 H&K news release. Under the agreement, the rifles will be manufactured by H&K in Oberndorf, Germany, and will begin to arrive in the H&K-USA facility in Columbus, Georgia, early next year, according to the release. Once there, H&K-USA workers will install scopes and mounts purchased by the Army under a separate agreement. "This is a significant achievement for Heckler & Koch," H&K-USA's chief operating officer, Michael Holley, said in the release. "The HK SDMR system will add much-needed capabilities to virtually every squad in the Army. We are honored by this opportunity."

The new SDMRs are part of an interim effort to make squads more lethal ahead of the Army's fielding of the Next-Generation Squad Weapon system sometime in 2022, service officials have said. In May 2017, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley told Senate Armed Services Committee members that the service's current M855A1 Enhanced Performance Round will not defeat enemy body armor plates similar to the U.S. military-issue rifle plates such as the Enhanced Small Arms Protective Insert, or ESAPI. As a short-term fix, the Army selected the G28 as its M110A1 Compact Semi-Automatic Sniper System in 2016, to be used with the service's new 7.62mm enhanced performance round to give squads more penetrating power. In the past, the Army relied on the Enhanced Battle Rifle, or EBR, 14 -- a modernized M14 equipped with an adjustable aluminum stock with pistol grip, scope and bipod legs -- to fill the growing need by infantry squads operating in Afghanistan to engage enemy fighters at longer ranges.

But the EBR is heavy, weighing just under 15 pounds unloaded. The M110A1 weighs about 11 pounds. In the long term, the Army is working with gunmakers to develop the new Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) that is slated to fire a special, government-produced 6.8mm projectile that promises higher velocities at greater ranges, service officials say. The program is being designed to produce an automatic rifle version to replace the M249 squad automatic weapon and a carbine version to replace the M4carbine. Army officials said recently that they expect to begin receiving prototypes of the NGSW in July and August and that the weapon could be fielded to units beginning in late fiscal 2020.

## **Battle of Britain hero, Squadron Leader John Hart, dies aged 102**

*Jane Wharton 24 Aug 2019*

Tributes have been paid to one of the last surviving Battle of Britain veterans, who has died aged 102. The number of Battle of Britain veterans still with us has fallen to just four with the death of Squadron Leader John Hart. The hero pilot was one of 'The Few' who ensured the Germans did not invade Britain in the Second World War by defeating the Luftwaffe. Tributes have now been paid following his death at the age of 102 with many saying his achievements must 'never be forgotten.' Battle of Britain historian Andy Saunders said: 'The debt that the nation and the free world owes to those heroes of the "Few" can never be underestimated, and it is terribly sad that the "Few" are yet fewer. 'They are our last living link to those desperate days of 1940, but the debt we owe does not lessen or diminish with their passing. 'In their day, they were a band of brothers.' John Hart said he never felt like a hero during his distinguished flying

career Sqn Ldr Hart was born in Canada in 1916 and went on to serve in modern-day Myanmar and Italy, where he won the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry. An engineer by trade, he learnt to fly at Halifax Flying Club in Canada before joining the RAF in January 1939. The following year he joined 602 Squadron at RAF Westhampnett in West Sussex and he was scrambled on a daily basis. During his service, Sqn Ldr Hart helped shoot down a Ju88 fast bomber off the East Sussex coast and a Me109 during a duel in the skies over Kent. There were also several close calls, including one incident when a Ju88 put a hole in his radiator at 20,000ft over the English Channel and he somehow limped back to base.



David Brocklehurst MBE, chairman of the Kent Battle of Britain Museum, said: ‘John was the archetypal Battle of Britain pilot; very modest and self-effacing – the epitome of what they stood for. ‘He should be remembered for his bravery. Many of these men said they were not heroes, just doing their duty, but we see them all as heroes. ‘Sadly, they are a dying generation and there are only four of The Few still living. ‘It makes it all the more important that we carry on their legacy as there will be a time when they will no longer be able to do so. ‘What they achieved must never be forgotten.’ The four remaining Battle of Britain heroes are Flight Lieutenant William Clark, Wing Commander Paul Farnes, Flying Officer John Hemmingway and Flight Lieutenant Maurice Moundson. The Battle of Britain took place between July 10 and October 31, 1940.

Almost 3,000 Allied airmen, including 112 Canadians, took part, of which 510 were killed. Sir Winston Churchill summed up the contribution of RAF Fighter Command to the war effort with the words ‘never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few’.

## **A Russian Destroyer Allegedly Sailed into the Line of Fire**

Russian destroyer created a "dangerous situation" during multinational shooting drills in the Black Sea. [Ryan Pickrell, Business Insider](#) July 12, 2019



During a US and Ukrainian-led multinational maritime exercise, a Russian destroyer created a "dangerous situation" by sailing into an area restricted for live-fire drills, the Ukrainian Navy said in a statement. The Russian Kashin-class guided-missile destroyer Smetlivy purposefully sailed into an area reserved for naval gunfire

exercises, part of the latest iteration of Exercise Sea Breeze, the Ukrainian Navy said in a Facebook post. "The Russian Federation once again showed its true face and provoked an emergency situation in the Black Sea, ignoring international maritime law," the post explains, according to a translation by Ukrainian media.

The Ukrainian frigate Hetman Sahaydachniy attempted to communicate with the Russian ship, but the latter is said to have feigned communication problems. The Russian military, which has been conducting drills in the same area, says that the Ukrainian Navy is lying. "The Ukrainian Navy's claim that the Black Sea Fleet's Smetlivy patrol vessel has allegedly entered a closed zone where Sea Breeze-2019 drills are held is not true," Russia's Black Sea Fleet said in a statement carried by Russian media. "Smetlivy acts in strict compliance with the international law."

A US Navy spokesman told Defense One that the Russian ship was present but declined to offer any specific details on the incident. "The presence of the Russian ship had no impact to the exercise yesterday and all evolutions were conducted as scheduled," Lt. Bobby Dixon, a spokesman for the US Navy's 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet, told the outlet. He added, without elaborating, that "it can be ill-advised to enter an area given the safety hazard identified in a Notice to Mariners." The drills involved around 3,000 troops, as well as 32 ships and 24 aircraft, from 19 different countries and focused on a variety of training areas, including maritime interdiction operations, air defense, amphibious warfare, and more.

## **New Army Commander Installed**

Lee Berthiaume, The Canadian Press August 20, 2019



*Lieutenant-General Wayne Eyre listens to speakers during a change of command parade for the Canadian Army on Parliament Hill Tuesday, August 20, 2019 in Ottawa.*

*THE CANADIAN PRESS/Adrian Wylde*

OTTAWA -- Cannons boomed on Parliament Hill Tuesday as the military installed a new Canadian Army commander, hoping to march past years of instability in

the most senior ranks over the failed prosecution of Vice-Admiral Mark Norman. Under a cloudless sky on the lawn in front of Centre Block, Lt.-Gen. Wayne Eyre officially took the reins of the army from LGen. Jean-Marc Lanthier in a ceremony that was at once familiar but also extremely unusual. It was only two months ago that Eyre had been installed in a similar change-of-command ceremony as the chief of military personnel -- a position replete with importance given the many human-resources challenges currently facing the Forces. While most expected Eyre to remain in the job for several years, that all changed when the case against Norman was dropped in May -- even before Eyre was made chief of military personnel. Vance subsequently asked LGen. Paul Wynnyk to step aside as the military's second-in-command to make room for Norman, whom Wynnyk replaced as vice-chief of defence staff last year.

Norman then announced in June that he had reached a confidential settlement with the government and was retiring, prompting Vance to reverse course and ask Wynnyk to stay on. But Wynnyk declined in July and announced he was pressing ahead with his own retirement, forcing Vance to move Lanthier from his post as army commander to the vice-chief position. That opened up the hole that Eyre filled. His position will be filled by Vice-Admiral Haydn Edmundson in a change-of-command ceremony on Thursday. Vance, Lanthier and Eyre acknowledged the twists and turns that preceded the new army commander's installation on Tuesday, which military officials hoped would lead to calm and stability for the foreseeable future. "I am humbled and more than a little surprised by the short notice to have been asked to command an institution with such a proud history," said Eyre, who served as deputy commander of the UN mission in South Korea before taking over as chief of military personnel. "The last two years have been quite the roller-coaster in terms of abrupt life-path changes." For his part, Vance used his address during the ceremony to express his confidence in both Lanthier and Eyre to fulfil their new roles as senior military leaders. "Just as I'm sure LGen. Eyre will serve with the same exceptional focus and determination, I know you will do so as vice-chief," Vance said to Lanthier. "Congratulations to both of you."

## **Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates**

No update this week.

Keep those stories, calendar events and pictures coming! [president.vcrgunners@gmail.com](mailto: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:** Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Deployment Unit. Fuller began his "Dymaxion investigations in 1927, with a proposal for a mass-produced bathroom and a house. His early investigations coupled with the happy (if anecdotal) accident of seeing a grain bin, led him to develop the version of the Dymaxion Deployment Unit seen here. Commissioned by the US army for field housing, hundreds of these units were shipped to the Persian Gulf during World War Two.

**This Week:** As the dreaded heat of summer finally abates, allowing us to don tweed, light the fire, and relax with a mulled wine and golden retriever, we can also spend hours and hours watching old movies. Naturally, for the types who read this column, such would be ones like “The Way Ahead”, where suave David Niven and his motley band of misfits finally find their way, and march into the fog of war as heroes all. Or, you might want your dose of science fiction. Your author prefers “Doctor Who” above all others of the genre but admits that the 1960s rip-off with Peter Cushing wasn’t quite up to scratch, and the less said about the 1990s “Made for Americans” version, the better. So, cinematically we might be drawn to the “Star Trek” series, partly due to its Canadian content (two main characters, one with a D-Day connection), or to the “Star Wars” series, pictured below. Ripping stuff!



However, although the above-mentioned series seems totally American, nationalists and sons of the Empire can rest assured that there is something that

connects the epics to the Canadian Army. Just what that is may be inferred by a careful examination of this “for educational purposes only” image. If you know what that connection is, please contact our editor, Star Trooper Mugford ([bob.mugford@outlook.com](mailto:bob.mugford@outlook.com)), or the author, Space Cadet John Redmond ([john.d.\\_redmond@telus.net](mailto:john.d._redmond@telus.net)). Exterminate! Exterminate! (a Doctor Who moment)

### **From the ‘Punitary’**

What is the difference between ignorance and apathy? I don't know, and I don't care.

### **Murphy’s Other Laws**

NEVER get into a fight without more ammunition than the other guy

### **Quotable Quotes**

Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever. - *Napoleon Bonaparte*



*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 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day  
and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our 'Royal' Designation*

*to be held at*

*BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:RSVP@rusivancouver.ca)

Send payment to:  
Treasurer, RUSI Vancouver  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> 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*

**15<sup>th</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY RCA**  
**&**  
**THE 78<sup>th</sup> FRASER HIGHLANDERS**  
**IRISH WHISKEY TASTING AND FUND RAISER**

**ARE YOU A PROUD GUNNER? A PROUD HIGHLANDER WHO SUPPORTS OUR HOME AT THE BESSBOROUGH ARMOURY? AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER WHO WANTS TO STAND TALL AND SHOW THEIR SUPPORT TO THE AIMS OF THE REGIMENT DURING ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR IN 2020?**

**WAIT NO LONGER!**

**All profits raised by the 15th Field Regimental Society and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders Fort Fraser Garrison will go towards supporting the 15 Field Centennial Projects next year in 2020.**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser's Highlanders invite you, and any like-minded guests of your acquaintance, to attend an Irish Whiskey fund raising and whisky tasting event. There will be food, draw prizes, and music.

For the Full 'Whiskey Fleet', Tickets are **\$55.00** per person by Credit Card, Cheque, or by exact change, otherwise your \$60 in bills will be gratefully accepted towards our good cause. Bernard Rowe, who will be relieving you of your burden of carrying cash, will meet you at the front door and will be most appreciative. For those who are driving, or prefer the options from the No-Host bar, you pay a meager **\$25.00**. **Only 50 tickets will be sold for the full whisky fleet! Bring guests!**

Dress is business casual. Kilts and highland dress, of course, are most welcome.

**DATE:** Friday – September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**TIME:** 1800 hrs – 2300 hrs

**LOCATION:** 15<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment RCA  
2025 West 11<sup>th</sup> Ave Van, BC V6J 2C7

**DO NOT MISS OUT!**

**TO RESERVE YOUR TICKET CONTACT:** Major James Barrett  
Cell: (604) 916-1766  
E-Mail: [barrettjd007@gmail.com](mailto:barrettjd007@gmail.com)

Tax receipts will be issued for all donations upon request.