

Van Arty Association and RUSI Van Members News May 5, 2020

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 your 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 - Lunches suspended until further notice.

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

- May 06** RUSI Vancouver virtual presentation - Canada and the Cold War - 4
- May 13** RUSI Vancouver virtual presentation - Canada and the Cold War - 5
- May 20** RUSI Vancouver virtual presentation - Canada and the Cold War - **Final**

Everyone stay safe!!

World War 2 – 1945

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

May 6th: US troops reach Pilsen, and Patton is outraged when he is ordered to halt in place while the resistance is still fighting with the SS in Prague. The British forces coming down the Sittang link up with the occupiers of Rangoon; there are tens of thousands of ragged, starving Japanese in their wake and the next couple of months will be given to doing execution on them as they attempt to flee towards Thailand while British operational planning for the liberation of Malaya begins. Heavy rains begin on Okinawa to usher in a month of deep WW-1 style mud, while US troops lurch forward to bag Machinto Airfield and most of Maeda Ridge. Germany has rewarded 27 of its heroes with the Knights Cross with swords, diamonds and oak leaves, and an additional 159 have received the Cross with swords and Oak Leaves alone. The last man to be so distinguished receives his award today. SS-Obersturmbannführer Otto Weidinger has fought in the SS Division Das Reich (and its predecessor groups) since 1939 in all its campaigns; and exemplifies the high standards of bravery and direct leadership that this elite unit demands of its officers in battle.

May 7th: General Jodl and Admiral Freideburg sign an unconditional surrender (to take effect at 2301 GMT on 8th May) at Eisenhower's headquarters. Even so, U2336 bags the Kriegsmarine's last two merchant ships of the war in Europe off of Scotland. On Okinawa, Private Dale M Hansen of the 1st Marines stages a lone assault on another strongly held ridge line. First, he takes a bazooka and knocks out a pillbox, and then Japanese fire knocks out his rocket launcher. So, he grabs a rifle, crawls up to a Japanese trench and shoots four of the occupants, then killing the other two with the rifle butt after it jams. He comes back with another rifle and a supply of grenades and goes after a mortar post, killing its eight defenders. Private Hansen is killed by a sniper three days later, and so his award of the Medal of Honor is posthumous.

May 8th: As the Western Allies celebrate **VE day**, German forces in Prague, Latvia (on the Kurland Peninsula), sundry pockets in East Germany and Norway lay down their arms. In Norway, German investigators finally learn the real name of one of the main leaders of the Resistance... not that it matters now. Gunnar Sónstebj is out of aliases after developing dozens of them but will become Norway's greatest hero and the only man to have three swords appended to his War Cross.

May 9th: The Germans ratify their surrender and their remaining armies in East Prussia and Pomerania yield to the Soviets – who celebrate this day as VE Day. US troops from 7th Army get their mitts on Goering. The unrepentant Belgian Rexist Standartenführer Leon Degrelle of the SS Walloon Brigade has fought hard and courageously -- winning the Knight's Cross and receiving Oak Leaves to append to it from Hitler's hand directly. The end of the war in Europe finds him in Norway, where he is acutely aware that he will receive no sympathy from the victors. He and several other men of like mind appropriate a He-111 on VE Day and fly to Spain this evening calculating correctly that all those who might intercept the flight will be too busy celebrating. So, one last German bomber flies across Western Europe as the lamps of the cities below all gleam in peace once more. Degrelle finds sanctuary in Spain where he remains an anachronism until his death in 1994 – the last freely practicing survivor of the Fascist and Nazi movements.

Essential Reading: One of the first and best histories of the end of the war in Europe is Chester Wilmot's classic 1952 'The Struggle for Europe'. Being an Australian, he had no particular need to buff up either the British or the Americans at the expense of the other, as a war correspondent in Europe he often had a first-hand perspective on many events and was familiar with many of the actors. He also had a chance to interview many senior German leaders immediately after the war. With a good writing style and a ready ability to switch from the big picture to the little one, it is still a very readable history.

May 10th: Quisling and his cadres are arrested in Norway, but the Reichs Commissioner and Chief of Police commit suicide before they are captured. 40th Division lands on northern Mindanao as the usual stubborn and pointless Japanese resistance continues. On Okinawa, the 5th Marines claw their way into yet another Japanese defensive position, drawing the usual hell storm of carefully prepared defensive fire. Pharmacist 2nd Class William D Halyburton is a Navy corpsman with the Marines and goes to the aid of the wounded of the leading squad. He is tending to the point man of this squad, when his patient is struck again by a Japanese bullet.

Halyburton immediately shields this wounded man with his own body and continues to work until mortally wounded himself. Thanks to Halyburton's ministrations and self-sacrifice, the wounded Marine survives. Halyburton posthumously receives the Medal of Honor.

Essential Reading: Warning – this is not recommended as a factual book, but as an exercise in conspiracy theory and the pernicious effect it can have. James Baque wove a notion that the Americans and French deliberately killed a million German POWs after the end of the war and published his theory in a 1989 book 'Other Losses'. While the book's fallacious arguments have been thoroughly demolished, conspiracy theories are immune to logic and fact. Those collections on the war that are not private are encouraged to paste warning labels on the dust jacket...

May 11th: Schoerner's Army Group Centre (in a pocket near Prague) surrenders – there are still some German forces fighting their way free of Yugoslavia so they can surrender to somebody who won't immediately execute them, but for all intents and purposes the War in Europe is over: There will be more casualties too – many German prisoners will never return from Soviet captivity and hundreds of thousands of German civilians are going to die in episodes of ethnic cleansing from the Baltic to Yugoslavia. The Soviets are also setting up 100 control and filtration camps to process 4.2 million of their citizens who survived their time as POWs or slave laborers. Perhaps sixty million Europeans have been displaced – many will never find their way home again; whole cities are in ruins and by some accounts there isn't a building with a roof to it from Moscow to Berlin. The US forces on Okinawa stage a general coordinated assault on the Shuri line, but the Japanese continue to die hard and only a few gains are made. The Australian 6th Division's forgotten campaign against the abandoned Japanese 18th Army in the Aitape-Wewak area of New Guinea has continued for over a year; today a new landing near Wewak cuts the Japanese off from their last airfield and last port. On Okinawa Captain Seymour W Terry of the 96th Infantry Division stages a one-man assault on a Japanese defensive position to lead his company up Zebra Hill. His repeated lone assaults on machine gun bunkers kill 40 Japanese soldiers and enable his troops to take their objective; shortly afterwards he is killed by a mortar bomb. He is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

75 Years of Liberation of The Netherlands

Reflections of a Canadian Soldier

As we approach Remembrance and Liberation Day in The Netherlands on the 4th and 5th of May respectively, we find humanity embroiled in another global battle, the battle against COVID-19. To that end, while we are all preoccupied with doing our part to defeat this dreadful virus, we will solemnly remember the victims of wartime violence and celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of The Netherlands in a manner no one would have imagined a few short weeks ago. Canada has a long and very close relationship with The Netherlands. The onslaught of the Corona virus has led to the postponement of nearly 80 of the over 140 commemorative events that Canada was supporting over the period of the 75th Anniversary. It also impacted 33 Canadian groups that were planning to take part in those celebrations. As we take time for reflection on the Dutch Remembrance and Liberation Days this May, on behalf of all Canadians, I would like to thank The Netherlands for the manner in which they continue to

honour and respect Canada's fallen soldiers, sailors, and aviators - You are the guardians of Canada's war dead.



Wreath laying at Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery 2019. Ambassador Lisa Helfand and Canadian Defence Attaché, Colonel Tim Young.

There are 5,712 Canadian Forces service members buried in 199 cemeteries in The Netherlands. This figure includes 55 service personnel from First Nations communities and 14 from Newfoundland. The large majority of these personnel are buried in three Commonwealth War Cemeteries in Bergen op Zoom, Holten, and Groesbeek. The other 196 cemeteries are dispersed throughout the country, amongst local communities where the majority are aviators who are laid to rest in close proximity to where their aircraft were brought down. To the average Canadian, the bespoke manner in which Dutch people honour our war dead is something to behold. The entire nation in one way, shape, or form is engaged in the act of remembrance.

It is simply impossible to name every Dutch group or activity that is involved with commemorating Canada's contribution to the liberation of The Netherlands. Nevertheless, the ingenuity behind how Dutch communities, the caretakers of our fallen, recognize the sacrifices Canadians have made for their freedom is nothing short of incredible. The scope of the activities range from organizations that span the whole country to smaller, local groups that are entirely dedicated to specific events that happened in their own communities. There are festivals, museums, marching bands, re-enactors, commemorative events, and many imaginative projects. Furthermore, families and individuals become involved in some capacity. Whether it is sponsoring a Canadian Veteran in their home when they come to visit their lost comrades, attending a commemoration, bloemenkinderen (flower children) laying flowers on graves, or placing a candle on a grave on Christmas Eve, there is some way everyone can contribute. Even the world renowned 4 Daagse – Fours Days March in Nijmegen pays a tribute to Canada's and other nations fallen during the event. In short, at every level from families to the National 4-5 May Committee, the value of freedom is woven into the very fabric of every Dutch citizen.

Freedom is one of the cornerstones that defines the national identity of both Canada and the Netherlands. In fact, freedom is so important to our identities that it is cited in the lyrics of both national anthems – O Canada and Wilhelmus, which also happens to be the oldest national anthem in the world. There is however a nuance to how freedom is regarded in both countries, which can be seen in the manner how the Dutch celebrate and commemorate freedom, and why Canadians flock to The Netherlands to participate in those events. In particular, since Confederation in 1867, Canada has not experienced a direct threat to its sovereignty in the same manner as The Netherlands had in World War 2. Canadians have not had to directly endure the hardship and devastation of fighting to regain freedom on Canadian soil. Moreover, Canada has always supported the fight against tyranny by sending its armed forces to foreign lands. As

such, to fully understand the value of freedom and the struggle and sacrifices made to regain it, Canadians go to Europe and other far-off lands. They particularly come to The Netherlands to talk to people, to walk the battlefields, and to see first-hand the Canadian soldiers' graves to learn and comprehend the destruction and impact that the Second World War had to preserve freedom. This important point is a key tenant ingrained in Dutch culture, and whether attending a commemoration, or a festival, the impact of the war still to this day, has a real bearing on Dutch people, as the value of freedom has never been taken for granted.

In recent times, the number of veterans and civilians that experienced the perils and recounted the hard lessons of the Second World War have begun to dwindle. People have started to speculate on how the liberation of The Netherlands will be commemorated once they have all passed. Veterans themselves perhaps express it best through the lyrics of a Bing Crosby song, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." World War Two veterans are being replaced by younger generations, all who have served in the same regiments as their forefathers. Numerous groups of these veterans were poised to come to The Netherlands this May, as they too come to be reminded of the impacts of war and pay tribute to their brothers in arms.

While veterans are a catalyst to remembrance, the future actually rests with our younger generations. The power of youth cannot be underestimated as Dutch high school students have led commemorative events in Canadian War Cemeteries for their visiting Canadian high school guests. The hard lessons of war are not lost on Dutch youth and it is truly inspirational to see them share their understanding of freedom with their foreign friends. Before the effects of COVID-19 led to the postponement of this year's celebrations, there were over 2,200 Canadian school children planning to join the remembrance and liberation ceremonies this spring.

While every commemoration honouring Canada's World War 2 service personnel is steadfastly attended by members of the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces, the Canadian Armed Forces also pays tribute to Dutch service personnel who lost their lives in service of their country. For example, each year on the 4th of May, the Canadian Armed Forces participates in the Royal Netherlands Air Force remembrance parade at Memorial Square - the Obelisk, at Soesterberg Air Base. During this parade a special tribute is made to all Dutch aircrew that lost their lives in the previous calendar year. The Canadian Armed Forces also pays tribute to the Dutch resistance from World War 2 at the Prins Bernhard Stoottroepen commemoration. This unique Infantry Regiment was formed by Prins Bernhard in 1944 from a group of resistance fighters. The Canadian Armed Forces has even attended a joint memorial in Hoogkerk, where both nations honoured two Canadian infantrymen that fell in the Battle of Groningen, the aircrew of an allied bomber, and a Dutch Mortarman serving with 13 Infanteriebataljon, 11 Luchtmobiele Brigade of the Royal Netherlands Army. Korporaal Kevin Roggeveld was recently killed on operations in Mali in 2016. Canada along with many other countries that make up the diplomatic community in The Netherlands, attend other nations commemorative events to pay tribute to their service personnel that also lost their lives in service of their nation.

Throughout the period of the 75th Anniversary, the Canadian Embassy had planned to support over 140 events, which were grouped in clusters with multiple ceremonies occurring on the

same day throughout the country. In order to support this significant undertaking, it took a whole of embassy approach consisting of members of the Canadian Armed Forces, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada Border Services Agency, Global Affairs Canada, other Canadian Diplomats, and Local Engaged Employees. As Canadian Embassy staff, we are deeply touched and immensely proud that the Dutch members of our team eagerly volunteered to represent Canada at some of these events, showing again their commitment to remembrance.

As a Canadian soldier and veteran serving in the Netherlands, it is truly extraordinary to see the breadth of the efforts to honour Canada's fallen. It has been remarkable to appreciate: seeing the numerous Canadian flags lining the streets marking the day a city or a village was liberated, like in Apeldoorn; watching the Royal Canadian Legion (Netherlands Branch) proudly support a local commemoration with a Colour Party; reading the profile of a Canadian soldier buried in Groesbeek War Cemetery written by a Faces-to-Graves volunteer; watching a convoy of 'Keep-Them-Rolling' restored military vehicles with their re-enactors drive into a memorial site; listening to a Dutch volunteer talk about Canadian service members buried in Holten War Cemetery; observing an entire community come together to tell the tragic events of the fate of an aircraft like Halifax Bomber L9561 in Wons; working with a local community to make a case to identify the grave of a missing-in-action Canadian soldier such as Lieutenant John G Kavanagh in Steenderen; and proudly standing at the closing scene of Bergen op Zoom's theatre presentation Supersum and sing Canada's national anthem side by side with hundreds of local citizens. It is clear that 75 years later the loss of those 5,712 Canadian soldiers, sailors, and aviators has not been in vain.

This year the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a new reality to the May 4th and 5th commemorations and celebrations, but it has not deterred the Dutch. They refuse to be denied their 75th Anniversary party, and as a matter of fact, preparations have already begun to transform this year's plans into '75+1 Years of Liberation'. The pandemic will equally not discourage Canadians as we too look forward to being there next year, side-by-side with our Dutch friends.

Lest we forget – N'oublions jamais - Opdat wij niet vergeten.

Tim R Young

Colonel, Canadian Defence Attaché – The Netherlands

From Juno to Victory: Messages to the Netherlands from Canadian Veterans

Events, Juno Beach Centre, Witnesses to History | May 1, 2020

The Juno Beach Centre is pleased to share these messages from some of the Canadian veterans who were interviewed last year for the [75th anniversary of D-Day](#). Almost one year later, we are very grateful to celebrate this [75th anniversary of Victory in Europe](#) with them. Each of these men participated in the Liberation of the Netherlands and despite being unable to attend any commemorations in person this year, they have written messages in honour of the anniversary to the Dutch people they formed lifelong bonds with.

Long live the Canadian-Dutch friendship forged in fire!

A Message from George Chow, 16th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, RCA.



Dear Dutch friends,

The fast approaching of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands on May 5th this year brings back memories of my time as a member of the Canadian troops; of the excitement of victory and jubilation shared with the citizens of the Netherlands in early May of 1945. The blossoms of the tulips at this time of the year in Vancouver, British Columbia where I reside also remind me of the strong friendship and continued relationship between Canada and the Netherlands.

During the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands in 2015, I was deeply touched by the warm welcome and greetings from the tens of thousands of spectators who attended the celebration events. There were children, adults, and people in their 70s, 80s and 90s at the Liberation Parade in Wageningen and in the Apeldoorn Parade. I could not help but think that those in their 70s, 80s, and 90s at the parade were just children when we entered the Netherlands to carry out our mission for peace and freedom in September of 1944.

Despite my not being able to visit the Netherlands this May due to the current COVID-19 situation, I join you all from this side of the ocean to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of your beautiful country.

Keep well and stay safe!

George Chow

After the war, George joined the 43rd HAA Regt which amalgamated with 15 Fd in 1957. He retired in 1963 as a WOII (MWO today) and BSM of 210 Battery.

[Watch George Chow tell his story in the Juno Beach Centre's Legacy of Honour Series.](#)

A Message from Lt Col (retired) Robert Spencer, RCA

Dear Dutch friends,

Since leaving the Netherlands in January 1946, I have been back many times in official and professional capacities, and as a traveller. As a young Canadian artillery officer, I served in the Netherlands beginning in autumn 1944, first supporting the 3rd Canadian Division in clearing the Scheldt waterway. Later, after moving north from Antwerp, I took part in the liberation of

Bergen Op Zoom. We then moved along the banks of the Maas River, which we cleared of retreating Germans. Our winter was spent on the Maas and included the costly battle to clear the small island of Kapelsche veer. We then moved to Nijmegen, from where we helped clear the west bank of the Rhine. After crossing the river into Germany, we fought in and out of the Netherlands, then along the Dutch/German border, meeting stiff opposition, into Germany until hostilities ceased.



Lt Col (retired) Robert Spencer

As we passed through towns, villages and the countryside of the Netherlands the welcome we received from the local Dutch population was warm and a memorable celebration. For many months I stayed in the home of Mr and Mrs Kleerebezem, who looked after me so well during my stay. On my departure, they presented me with a handsome handkerchief decorated with a picture of a windmill and the message “In Remembrance of Neede” and accompanied by a card inscribed “in Remembrance of your Staying at our House, with Kind regards.” I treasure these mementos to this day. I can say unreservedly that the part I played in the Liberation of the Netherlands is the aspect of my service that still gives me the most satisfaction. It resonates with me that the Netherlands, even after 75 years, considers the Liberation to be a massively significant part of its modern history.

[Watch Robert Spencer tell his story in the Juno Beach Centre's Legacy of Honour series.](#)

A Message from Roly Armitage, 3rd Medium Regiment, RCA.

Dear Dutch friends,

When I sit down to think about why I volunteered to serve, it wasn't until I had made it into Holland and witnessed the mess of things; how the people were treated, the children with little food nor comfort and too young to understand, and right then I KNEW that I had done the right thing. I had enlisted to help these less fortunate and beautiful people, whom I got to admire, and in some cases I became friends of many.

During my service in the Netherlands, we attacked the Scheldt estuary from the Dutch – or North – side of the Scheldt after liberating the Bergen op Zoom area in Holland, and along with many losses, particularly The South Saskatchewan Regiment, while attacking Walcheren



Island. We took thousands of German prisoners. This took about two months in the fall of 1944. We liberated the Eindhoven airport and then went further North to Nijmegen and Arnhem.

During a cold night near Eindhoven, I picked up two young Dutch children in a ditch. There were no houses to be seen within kilometers of where we were. I took them to our mobile kitchen and Chef and I cleaned and fed them. We had them for a couple of weeks before finding a society near Nijmegen to take them. One of them was only 6 years old.

I remember the demobilization period. One of my officers, Lt. Goldsmith, had hotel experience before the war and was asked to open the large hotel in Holland for troops to be entertained and have dances. All of it was very well chaperoned. It was there that one night, a young Dutch man drove up on a bicycle and asked to buy some petrol for his car. We informed him that we kept petrol for our own use only and he informed me that his dad made beer and told us we could trade. I said I wasn't the boss but that I would ask my officer. I asked him for his name, and he said: Freddy Heineken!

Best wishes, Roly Armitage

[Watch Roly Armitage tell his story in the Juno Beach Centre's Legacy of Honour Series](#)

For more stories go to:-

<https://www.junobeach.org/from-juno-to-victory-messages-to-the-netherlands-from-canadian-veterans/>

Norman Kirby

Bruce Morton April 30, 2020

Norman Kirby, soldier (born 9 July 1925 in New Westminster, BC). He served with the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment during the Second World War. He was involved in the D-Day landings and Normandy Campaign, the Battle of the Rhineland and the Liberation of the Netherlands.

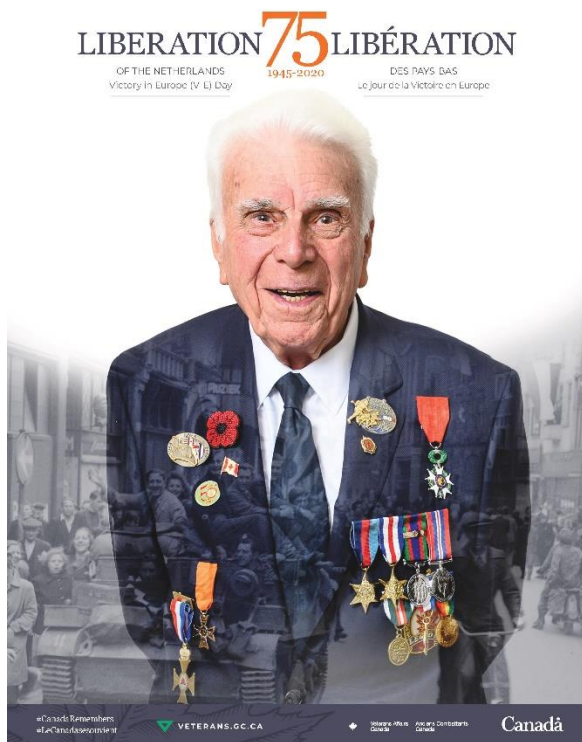
Early Life

Norman Kirby was born 9 July 1925 in New Westminster, British Columbia, the son of Harold Kirby and Katherine Campbell. He grew up during the Depression in North Vancouver. At age 14, he left school and went to work on tugboats.

Second World War

When the Second World War broke out, Norman Kirby tried to join the navy because of his tugboat experience. However, he was rejected because he had only a grade eight education. The

army agreed to accept him at age 17, but only with written consent from his father. During training, Kirby became very skilled with the Bren gun, a portable machine gun introduced in the 1930s, and with the PIAT (Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank Gun).



In March 2020, Veterans Affairs Canada unveiled a poster commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands and the Allied victory in Europe (V-E Day). The poster features veteran Norman Kirby of the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment, which helped liberate many Dutch towns in the final weeks of the war in Europe. In the background, the poster shows liberated citizens of the town of Zwolle welcoming Canadian soldiers.

(Veterans Affairs Canada)

Normandy Campaign

In April 1944, Norman Kirby was shipped to the United Kingdom and was then assigned to the [North Shore \(New Brunswick\) Regiment](#). On D-Day, at age 18, he landed with the regiment at Saint-Aubin-sur Mer and fought with the regiment throughout Normandy. In September 1944, Canadians were given the task of

capturing the French ports along the English Channel. The NS(NB)R was ordered to capture the fortress La Trésorerie, which defended the port of Boulogne. Three big German guns at La Trésorerie were a threat to ships in the channel. They could also fire across the channel into the south of England. After a lengthy battle and many casualties, the North Shore captured one of the guns. The other two eventually surrendered. Kirby's skills with the Bren gun and the PIAT contributed significantly to their success, and he was promoted to corporal.

Battle of the Rhineland

On 8 February 1945, Canadian forces invaded the Rhineland in western Germany. One of the deadliest battles was fought for the village of Keppeln. On February 26, the North Shore Regiment's B and C Companies advanced across a kilometre of open farmland to seize the village. German soldiers, who had hidden in a barn, waited until the NS(NB)R was 150 m away, then opened fire. Kirby was involved in an armoured attack against the German line but was blown off his tank. After fierce fighting, he and another soldier broke into the German garrison and captured the commander. About the same time, North Shore carriers with flame throwers silenced the guns in the barn. By evening, Keppeln belonged to the New Brunswick Regiment. At age 19, Kirby was promoted and became the youngest sergeant in the Canadian 3rd Division.

Liberation of the Netherlands

In April 1945, Norm Kirby and the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment helped liberate the Netherlands. The country had been occupied by German forces since May 1940. In the winter of 1944–45, thousands of Dutch people had died during what became known as the "Hunger

Winter.” In the final months of the War, Canadian forces were given the dangerous but critical mission of liberating the Netherlands from Nazi occupation. From early April 1945 until May 5, 1945, they advanced rapidly into the Netherlands after months of relentless fighting throughout the late summer, fall and winter of 1944-45. Canadians steadily pushed the Germans back, recapturing villages, towns and cities, often fighting one house at a time and assisted by information from Dutch resistance fighters. He and his comrades liberated the Dutch people, who had lived under Nazi occupation for five years. Watch Norm share his memories in the video at: <https://www.junobeach.org/75th-anniversary-of-victory-in-europe/> The Canadian soldiers were greeted with cheers and gratitude. (See also [Canadian Soldiers and the Liberation of the Netherlands](#).) Kirby's favourite photo of the war was taken with children in Groningen, minutes after the Germans had evacuated.



Norman Kirby and other members of the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment with Dutch children in Groningen, the Netherlands (April 1945).

(courtesy Norman Kirby)

Later Life

His superiors encouraged him to remain in the military when the war ended but Norman Kirby applied for a discharge. He spent a year in a military hospital recovering

from PTSD and went on to develop a successful career in real estate. Today he still lives in the lower mainland, residing in Lions Bay, BC.

Honours and Awards

For his service to Canada, Sgt Norm Kirby was awarded the following medals: 1939–45 Star, France & Germany Star, War Medal 1939–45, Defense Medal, and CVSM with Clasp. On the 70th anniversary of D-Day, Kirby was awarded France’s highest decoration, la Légion d'honneur. In 2020, Kirby was featured on a poster produced by Veterans Affairs Canada to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands.

Vancouver Artillery Association Yearbook Updates

May the Force be with you!!

VAA Virtual Lunch every Wednesday at Noon PDT - <https://zoom.us/j/710845848>

No computer? No smartphone? Dial in to 778 907 2071 Canada Meeting ID: 710 845 848

RCAA Virtual Coffee every Sunday at 1600 PDT - <https://zoom.us/j/710752062>

No computer? No smartphone? Dial in to 778 907 2071 Canada Meeting ID: 710 752 062

Looking forward to seeing you on Wednesday. If you have any problems connecting, email me at president.vcrgunners@gmail.com

We're still looking at raising funds to ensure that medals of former members aren't lost in private collections. If we all ponied up \$50.00, we would have quite the fund. Care to join our fundraising efforts? You'll get a charitable tax receipt from the Regimental Museum.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/medal-purchase.html>

Added a new member to the Military Medal list – Sergeant Fred Hayes Knowles, MM. Still looking for the details of the award. <https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/military-medal.html>

Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Thomas Perry was the architect for the Bessborough Armoury. He also submitted a proposal for the Vimy Ridge National Monument and was one of the 17 finalists. Check it out here.

<https://www.vancouvergunners.ca/whats-new/yearbook-update-19216561316>

Did you miss our Beer Call on Friday afternoon? We had 6 in the Officers' Mess and about 9 in the Junior Ranks. Great to hear that everyone is keeping safe in these not so normal times.

Who (or What) Is It?

Last Week: 101 Vancouver High School Cadet Corps on grounds of King Edward High School, prior to departure on Australian tour 1912. Capt RN Davey in front, Cadet Capt RA Seymour to his rear, both with drawn swords. Building is science Bldg, McGill University College, 12th Ave, Vancouver (prior to establishment of University of British Columbia).



*(photographer Major James Skitt Matthews,
City of Vancouver Archives, AM54-S4-: Mil P59)*

The Corps was raised following a request by Vancouver city council for Sgt Moscrop, the Drill sergeant of the 6th Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles, to teach school children drill to put on a display for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall's visit to Vancouver in September of 1901. While here, they opened the Drill Hall on Beatty Street, the home of the BCRs, and where the formation of 15 Fd was discussed in the Officers Mess in 1919. The Cadet Corps was formed as a militia unit and attached to the 6th DCOR. It was run through the Vancouver School Board, and existed right through the Great War, the 1920's and 30's and was disbanded in 1946. 2290 BCR was formed from the High School Units of St Patrick's and St George's High schools and may be at some time able to claim back to their earlier lineage. The earlier name lives on in the full name of 2290 BCR which is 2290 British Columbia Regiment (101 Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles) Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps.

This Week: The military history of Canada is filled with the names of famous units, and forgotten ones, as well as ones that left for glory overseas and never returned. One could include in that long list the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment, King Edward's Horse, The Prince of Wales Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians), the Rainy River Rifles, the Spuzzum Mounted



Muskets, the Churchill Frozen Dragoons, etc., etc. Those exotic regiments of yore might still make the heart beat faster, and the flag wave flappier, but there are other units which have completely faded from memory, and about which almost nothing has been written. Such is the unit featured in this week's quiz.

Keen-eyed readers (which, given the age of such, certainly limits the number) should recognize the location of this photo, as two of the buildings still exist. The time is obvious from the vehicles parked on the street, but what isn't obvious is who is being led by their band (or corps of drums, to be exact).

So, get your historian hat on, crack open those dusty tomes, and crank up the computational engine. Who are these men, and what happened to them? Send your musings to the editor, Bob Mugford (bob.mugford@gmail.com), or the author, John Redmond (johnd.redmond@telus.net).

From the 'Punitary'

What does the group moderator of Plastic Surgery Addicts Anonymous say as he opens a meeting? I see a lot of new faces here tonight.

Murphy's Other Laws

If there's more than one way to do a job and one of those ways will end in disaster, then somebody will do it that way.

Quotable Quotes

It is not how old you are, but how you are old. - *Jules Renard*

Wednesday Digital Video Lunch

No need to worry about COVID-19 when you go digital. Pop into our video lunch **at noon** on Wednesdays and say hi. All you need is a laptop, tablet or smartphone. These sessions are being hosted by the Vancouver Artillery Association and are **open to all** – especially those who attended Wednesday lunches.

Join us to check up on your old lunch buddies.

<https://zoom.us/j/710845848>

For details on downloading and setting up a Zoom account, see the **RUSI Vancouver** notice below



Zoom is the leader in modern enterprise video communications, with an easy, reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, chat, and webinars across mobile, desktop, and room systems. Zoom Rooms is the original software-based conference room solution used around the world in board, conference, huddle, and training rooms, as well as executive offices and classrooms. Founded in 2011, Zoom helps businesses and organizations bring their teams together in a frictionless environment to get more done. Zoom is a

publicly traded company headquartered in San Jose, CA.

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting now](#)

Use the link above on your computer Zoom program
or dial in on your phone 778 907 2071 Meeting ID: 710 845 848

Invite 2 friends! We have room for 100! See you on Wednesdays at noon.

Bring your own lunch and beverage of choice.



Royal United Services Institute Vancouver Society

2025 West 11th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 2C7
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Engaging RUSI Vancouver Members and Friends with Virtual Presentations!

Every Wednesday – Next Session on 6 May 2020

Topic: Canada and the Cold War

By now everyone has had enough of living in the bunker and maintaining “social distancing.” RUSI had planned to present a lecture series this Spring, but that was not possible for obvious reasons.

As an alternate, and in the spirit of our RUSI mandate on education - and by using **Zoom** - we are presenting a series of online lectures every Wednesday by military historian Col. (Ret'd) Keith Maxwell, OMM, CD. The 6-part topic is ‘Canada and the Cold War’. The first three sessions took place on April 15, 22 and 29.

The presentations continue on **Wednesday, 6 May** from **1:30 to 3:00 PM**. Subsequent sessions will be held on **May 13 and 20**. To participate, you need to register an account with **Zoom** – it is easy to do and it’s free. Here is the link to establish an account: <https://zoom.us/freesignup/>

Once you are registered, it is recommended that you download the application on your computer and sign on to the application. Here is the link to do that: <https://zoom.us/download>

We recommend that you download ahead of the scheduled date and time and play with the application a bit to become familiar with it. Keith Maxwell will host the sessions. He is familiar with the application and has implemented all the necessary precautions to keep the presentations safe and secure. If you wish to participate, register for the sessions by sending an email to both Cam Cathcart (lhccathcart@gmail.com) and Keith Maxwell (kdm Maxwell@gmail.com).

Once you are registered, you will receive an invitation to join the sessions by email. That email will be sent out about two hours before the sessions start. Many of you participated in the Cold War in one way or another – come learn more about what happened in the biggest war we never fought! We look forward to you joining us on Zoom on Wednesday, 6 May.

Cam Cathcart, President