



# The Guards Star

GGFG Regimental Association, Box 1212, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5R3

Regimental Website: [www.footguards.ca](http://www.footguards.ca)

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EDITOR: ESTELLE LANE

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## Message from the President

MWO Marty Lane, CD (Retd)

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With the nice weather we had in November it's kind of difficult to think of the fact that it is almost December and time to write another article for the Guards Star. The association has been plugging away at several events that are in the planning stages for the coming year. We are at present making plans for the Guards Ball which will be held on February 11, 2012 at the Chateau Laurier. The LCC has informed me that the Governor General and his wife are being invited to attend the ball but there is no confirmation yet as to his being in attendance. Even if he confirms attendance, that could be withdrawn in favour of other events. More info on the Ball later on in this issue of the Star.

We are also working on the band concert that is set for the afternoon of Sunday February 5, 2012 at the Nepean Centrepointe Theatre in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's sixtieth anniversary as our Reigning Monarch. The Regimental Band, along with the Central Band and Pipes and Drums, will participate. Information will be forthcoming in the form of posters which will be placed in the messes as well as advertising in the local newspapers.

The Association has started working on a combined Guards Associations luncheon to be held on the second Wednesday in May at the Headquarters Officers mess. This is hoped to be a gathering of members of the four Guards Associations (ours, Grenadiers, Horse Guards and Canadian Guards) who work or reside in the Ottawa area. There will be detailed information in the March issue regarding this event.

The Association once again held its annual reunion dinner on the weekend of September 23-24. with the Annual General Meeting being held on Friday evening followed by a meet and greet in the Officers Mess.

The dinner was held on Saturday evening preceded by our annual Memorial Service conducted by our Regimental Padre, The Reverend Canon David Clunie.

At the AGM it was moved and voted upon by the members present that the Association would be setting up a bursary for members of the Regimental Family. The by-laws were amended to reflect the changes to enact this bursary. More detailed information will be published in the March issue of the Star.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Committee for there service to the Association during the past year. At this time we have a couple of positions vacant on the committee. If you are interested in helping by filling one of these positions please let me know.

On behalf of the Association Executive, Estelle and myself, I wish all members and their families a safe, healthy Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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## Christmas Carol Service

The annual carol service will start at 1300 hours, Saturday December 17, 2011, followed by the children's Christmas party and reception at Bartholomew's Church, 125 MacKay Street Ottawa.

### Message from the LCol Comd

LCol Derek Cheff, CD, AdeC

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Fellow Guardsmen,

Here we are, sprinting to Christmas and the New Year once again. But, we should take at least one minute's pause to bask in the afterglow of an immensely successful domestic operations exercise in Stormont Township. I believe Exercise WOLF FORCE was a fitting reflection of the Regiment's strengths; operationally, administratively, and at the nuts and bolts level of straight soldiering. Thanks to our collective efforts, we have developed a sensible and practical vision for the TBG task, which will set the standard for those who follow behind us. I should mention that the exercise was a joint-achievement with 33 Signals Regiment, with whom we have been working closely with over the past two months to develop a headquarters structure and enable communications across our vast brigade AOR.

On the deployment file, I had the pleasure of welcoming back Lieutenant Colonel Rob Foster from Afghanistan on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November. Rob was clearly living in austere conditions in Afghanistan; I haven't seen him that skinny since he was a university student. And in those days all our available funds went to financing Officers' Mess bills. Rob, it is nice to have you back! Going out the door, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, I had my third and what is hopefully my final *pre-deployment coffee break* with Major Morgan Hladik (I paid each time). After six months of waiting with his kit packed, Morgan is now on a plane to Op SOPRANO in South Sudan, where I know he will do us proud working as a part of the UN assistance force.

As the Guards' Ball approaches, I remind everyone that this will once again be a first-rate event that is focused on recognizing our soldiers and musicians for their hard work. But this event will also highlight the importance of friends, family and all of those who support the Regiment in doing our jobs. The Ball only comes around once every

two years, so I have a very high expectation for the turn out for this special evening.

I hope we will all be able to take a well-deserved pause over the Christmas holidays. Throughout December, the Regiment will still hold several Christmas activities, which of course culminates with the Junior Ranks Christmas Dinner on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December. This is an event that non-serving members of the Regimental Family hold particularly close to their hearts, as we see each year by those who are kind enough to serve the turkey dinner. I look forward to seeing everyone there that night and enjoying the company of fellow guardsmen of all vintages.

Finally, Nancy and I wish you and your loved-ones all the very best for this Holiday Season. I hope to have a chance to see and chat with everyone over the course of regimental holiday activities. And as December winds down, and WOLF FORCE ENDEAVOUR beckons, we will *pause 2-3*, and then be ready to begin the sprint into the second half of the training year.

*Up the Guards!*

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### Message from the RSM

CWO A McKenzie, CD

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As we near the end of our fall training schedule we welcome a nice break for the holidays. In just about every Guards Star I speak of how busy we are but this fall has truly been one of the busiest in a long while. On top of our normal training regime the Regiment has about 40% of 1 COY on courses while still attending regular training, we have added additional training for the HQ elements as we operate as the 33 Brigade Territorial Battle Group (TBG) HQ/ lead unit and the band has its regular crazy schedule while assisting on unit exercises when available. The fall training period worked up to Exercise Wolf Force in November that involved all the regiments within 33 Brigade in three different training sites throughout Ontario and it all came under the command of LCol Cheff as the commander of the 33 TBG.

I am sure that other articles will cover off the many successful operational events that have occurred over the last several months but I would like to focus on the importance of the various social events for the entire Regimental family that took place.

The organizing committee of the Regimental Association once again put on a very enjoyable Regimental weekend culminating in the annual dinner. Reverend Canon Clunie presided over a Remembrance Service at St Bartholomew's, the Guards' Chapel, on November 6 that was well attended by the Regimental family and saw LCol Cheff, Major French and myself having to appear in CADPAT dress as we were in the midst of participating in Exercise Determined Dragon, an exercise that involved the 33 TBG HQ team. I am sure Reverend Clunie would like to see as good a turn out when the Guards Carol Service and Christmas party is held on December 17 at the chapel.

The messes were also very active on Remembrance Day and a considerable number of former Guardsmen were present to bring back memories and share old war stories. Even former SMaj John Falconer, who now lives a retired squire's life in New Brunswick, was in town and we caught up on our goings on. The Adjutant's Cup match between the officers and senior NCOs proved successful on a number of fronts (the Sgt's Mess won) which I am sure the DSgt will expand upon in his PMC article. Finally, though it has not happened as of the submission date of my article, I am sure the Men's Christmas dinner will be enjoyed by all as we celebrate the Christmas season and the end of our fall training schedule.

All of these events are made special by the presence of all the regimental family and I encourage all serving and former members to watch their Guards Star and Capt Rob Duncan's regular e-mail updates to get out to these events. In fact all are welcome at the appropriate messes on any Tuesday evening following training.

I also would like to welcome back LCol Foster from his successful tour in Afghanistan and, like his curious four year old son, wonder why he was kicked out of the country back to Canada.

Finally I wish all the regimental family a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and the best of health in the upcoming year.

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### Musical Notes from the Band

LCol Fran Chilton-Mackay, OMM, MSM, CD

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The Band has once again had an extremely busy fall and by the time our Christmas break rolls around we will have completed 34 engagements since September. Several performances for the Governor General and the senior Canadian Forces leadership throughout the fall have enabled the band to showcase its diverse talent.

We have welcomed several new members to the band either as transfers in or attach postings from other Army Reserve Bands. They are MCpl Brigitte Labelle (French Horn), MCpl Krystal Morrison (Clarinet), Cpl Adrienne Lorway (Clarinet), Mscn Pier-Emile Richer (Percussion), Mscn Greg Jones (French Horn) and Mscn Stefan Thompson (Trombone). MCpl Lauren Reade has returned from her leave of absence in the UK, so it does appear our net gain is "plus one" with the Band of the Scots Guards, however there are always developing stories!

Sadly we will be saying goodbye to Sgt Angela Steele, as she has accepted a Class B position with the Rocky Mountain Rangers in Prince George, BC. She has been a stalwart in the band for the past five years and her infectious enthusiasm will be near impossible to replace. We wish her all the best in her new position and her move closer to home. Gone but never forgotten.

The Band will once again be putting on a Christmas Concert at St Joseph's Parish in Orleans on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. We would love to see you there as we celebrate the holiday season. And don't forget the "Diamond Jubilee

Celebration Concert” being held at Centrepointe Theatre on Sunday February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Tickets will go on sale in the New Year through the Centrepointe Box Office. The show will feature our own Regimental Band, the Central Band of the Canadian Forces, pipers and drummers from The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa, the Air Command Pipes and Drums and the RCMP Pipes and Drums.

Thanks to Corporals Ann Gregory and H el ene Fortier who have provided an article on the bands participation, both musical and athletic, at the 4<sup>th</sup> Canada Army Run. “The Band that runs together, stays together” has become our most recent motto. Finally I know you will enjoy Cpl Gregory’s heartfelt article on her once in a lifetime opportunity to perform Last Post for her great-great uncle last month in France. What an amazing experience, and so very appropriate it was afforded to such a talented, devoted and selfless individual. Well done, Ann!! You did yourself, the Regiment and the Canadian Forces proud.

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### **W.J. Keating Club**

MWO Dave Snyder, CD

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Now that the summer is over, most members of the mess are very busy not only with unit commitments but also with civilian and personal ones as well. There is still time for some recreation though, which was good news for Sergeant Alexi Dallaire who was the top prize winner at the mess poker tournament held in October. He managed to hold off every challenger with his repeatedly poor cards that just happened to hit the turn, flop, and river almost every time.

Victory was also the theme at the next event which took place on Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. Once again, the Sergeants’ Mess defeated the Officers’ Mess four touchdowns to three on a warm day. This year had a different ambience with the spirited exuberance of some “occupy Ottawa” members who showed truly bizarre behaviour as they tried to cheer the teams along. A couple of passes from the officer quarterback went to these controlled-substance-enjoying folk in the belief they were part of that

team. Any long touchdown passes from the Sergeants’ Mess most valuable player – Sergeant Gareth Webb – would land around the tents of the occupiers to the enjoyment of all present. Thanks to the officers for a good feed of chili afterwards.

December will see mess members serving the hard-working junior ranks at the annual Christmas Dinner, scheduled for Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Also in December will be a mess meeting on Tuesday evening, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Elections will be held, so it’s time to step up and volunteer for a responsibility if you have not done so during 2011.

Congratulations to Sergeant Luc Joly who completed his DP3A (Infantry Platoon Second-in-Command Course) in Gagetown during October & November. He is now busy back in the quartermaster stores.

A last farewell was given to Sergeant Angela Steele following the Adjutant’s Cup with a presentation of her mug after three years of service to the unit as a senior NCO. She is preparing to take over administrative duties with a company of Rocky Mountain Rangers in Prince George, British Columbia. Good luck for the future and we hope to see you again sometime.

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### **BAND MEMBERS FIT AS A FIDDLE AS THEY SUPPORT THE CANADA ARMY RUN – 19 SEPTEMBER 2011**

Cpl Ann Gregory and Cpl H el ene Fortier

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Most people probably didn’t realize it, but for the second year the full weekend of Army activities was led by our very own LCol Fran Chilton Mackay. We all think of the 5K and half marathon events as being the Army Run, but there were several events over the course of the weekend that led up to the two races on Sunday September 18<sup>th</sup>. Army Run has become the fastest growing run in Canada with 18,000 participants!

The band was out in full force once again with 38 musicians. In addition to playing, we had nine runners from the band. Several played with the band for the 5K and then ran the half marathon, while others ran the 5K and returned to play for the half marathon.

Among our speedy runners we had Cpl Gabriel Bouchard who clocked a lightening 20 minutes 48 seconds ranking 179<sup>th</sup> out of over 7,000 runners (coming in the top 2.5% of all participants in the 5K). Musician Tait ran an impressive 23:50 with Cpl Lisa Bebyck and Cpl Krystal Morrison close behind.

For the half marathon, H el ene Fortier came in an impressive 1 hour 54 minutes, which ranked her in the top 15% of female runners. Cpl Ann Gregory finished her first half marathon at 1 hour 59 minutes closely followed by Cpl Angela Hardy, Sgt Angela Steele and Sgt Marianne Vincent, all coming in under 2.5 hours.

While just completing a half marathon is an accomplishment, the sense of teamwork and mutual support was foremost in my mind after the event. After being in the band for over 25 years, I feel that not only is the band at an all time high in terms of level of musicianship, but also in team spirit within the band. In addition, there are plenty of other runners within the band who would have performed equally well, but in order to ensure a strong sound and a balanced band, we were restricted as to the number of members who could run. The band looks forward to the next Army Run and hopes to increase the number of musicians who have added running to their already busy schedules.

### Ex Amphibious Guard

Lieutenant Chris Davey

Ex Amphibious Guard was a multi-faceted domestic exercise which culminated in three simultaneous building clearings. The exercise was tactical from the time we got off the buses to the time we called end ex. It was the most physically

difficult as the company became more cohesive. The final attack involved a flanking manoeuvre attacking uphill in thick bush.



L-R: Cpl Fascenatio, Sgt Kowlessar, Sgt Van Veen

After four successful attacks the company moved to a company hide and deployed OPs. After subsequent Frag Orders were disseminated, the company went to ground. The company woke up at 0300 and marched on to their objective. Under the direction of Sgt. Postma as recce commander the platoons were marched into their attack positions. The engineers linked up with 1 Platoon and helped them clear their objectives.



L-R: Gdsm O'Keefe, Cpl Henry, Cpl Giamberardino

Throughout the exercise 1 Company met many arduous challenges that they overcame. Constant drizzle, radio deficiency, thick mud and brush and challenging terrain bonded 1 Company

together during Amphibious Guard. 1 Company took rusty and underused skills and performed difficult challenges on a completely tactical exercise.

The Guards performed very well on Exercise Amphibious Guard. Sgt. Postma's recce detachment proved invaluable leading 1 Company onto position. The Guards excellent showing coincides perfectly with our lead of the 33 Territorial Battalion Group. Cpl. Sears and Cpl. Fortin got promoted by OC 1 Captain Brulotte at CSDH.

*Up the Guards!*

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## **PAYING RESPECT TO OUR FALLEN**

Cpl Ann Gregory, CD

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Have you ever felt that something was "meant to be"? Whether you believe in fate or that someone is looking over us and directing us, sometimes it feels like pieces of the puzzle magically fall into place. Never have I felt this stronger than in the case of the burial of Private Alexander Johnston.

While digging to erect a new factory, the remains of a First World War soldier were discovered in Raillencourt, northern France. Based on collar dogs and other artefacts found with the remains, and after historical and forensic research, investigators believed that he was one of two missing soldiers from the 78<sup>th</sup> battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in late 1918 when the battalion was fighting in the area near Arras and along the Canal du Nord. A genealogist performed extensive research to track down the families of both soldiers, which is no small feat considering the lapse of time, and that they were searching the female side of the family as mitochondrial DNA (passed down from mother to child and only passed on by females) is most effective after so much time has passed. The Johnston family had predominantly boys, and each time the women married they took on their husband's name making it more difficult to track.

Can you imagine getting a call on the phone asking if you are the son of Rebecca Johnston Cook? Indeed my father was, and at the age of 78 he was the last possible living relative with mitochondrial DNA. They mailed him a DNA kit with instructions, which he returned it to the lab. Several months later he heard that he was a match and that they had indeed found his Great Uncle Alexander Johnston. There had been a delay as investigators had to get another sample from the remains as the first one didn't have sufficient DNA to test.

As difficult as it was to track down family who could be anywhere in Canada (or even in the world) what do you think the likelihood is of that person living in your city, much less on your street or even in your building? Such was the case. The forensic archaeologist discovered that she lived in the same building as my father. He was the president of the condominium for four years and as such he knew almost every resident except the hard working, dedicated individual who had been searching for him. They had never met and everything was done professionally and objectively. She only revealed this amazing fact long after there was confirmation of the DNA match by an independent lab. Finding my father was the first key to the puzzle. How did fate bring them so close, and how many times had they passed each other in the hallway without even knowing it?

The other huge and incredible piece of this puzzle is the fact that not only do I play trumpet, I am serving in the military and am related to Alexander Johnston, but that I also feel incredibly proud and honoured to play the Last Post. I have the opportunity to play more Last Posts than the rest of the trumpeters in the section, and more than some full-time military trumpeters. I played Last Post for the burial of Captain Nichola Goddard, the first Canadian female to die in combat. I was the first to play Last Post at the new Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. for Remembrance Day. I was also the first to play Last Post in the Hall of Honour in the new war museum.

I hope that you will not feel that I am bragging as I simply have been given more opportunities and in many cases have been in the “right place at the right time”. Playing the Last Post is an honour bestowed only on trumpet players.

Have you ever felt the burning desire to write an article? A few years after joining the band, I wrote an article about how strongly I felt about the Last Post. It was published in the *Guards Star* and my Director of Music asked if he could submit it for consideration for publication in England. This is how strongly I feel about the Last Post, and how I feel about what I am writing today.

What are the odds of a First World War soldier having a great grand niece who plays trumpet in the military and specializes in the Last Post? To me it is akin to winning the lottery. There is no money involved, but the odds are phenomenal.

There were other coincidences with the burial. My father actually had Private Johnston’s death certificate, the Johnston family bible and other documents in his possession that assisted the investigation. While visiting his cousin in Scotland prior to the service, my father and his cousin went through Aunt Minnie’s photo album. I remember Aunt Minnie who had visited my grandmother several times in Hamilton. In the album they found a picture that was later confirmed to be that of Private Alexander Johnston. At the service in France there were two young women who were tour guides at Vimy and Beaumont Hamel. They had had their names drawn out of a hat and only two were selected to attend the burial out of the fifteen guides. One of those women was the eldest daughter of my sister-in-law’s cousin, and neither my brother, David, nor the girl, Patricia were aware that the other was in France or participating in the ceremony until the service had begun. I had also played in the Foot Guards band for 11 years with the Chief Historian at DND who was in charge of providing the historical context for the service. It almost seems as though someone was directing these events – maybe Private Johnston himself!

While I have played the Last Post many times, including performing for television interviews for Global and CBC National just days before leaving, nothing was more nerve racking than preparing for this important service that would be recorded live by Canadian, French and Scottish press. There was no chance to take back a note, or to play it over again. The morning of the service it was pouring rain, and the soldiers performed admirably taking the casket out of the hearse with military precision and bringing it into the small church. Our entire family participated in the service with my father reading a few words about Private Johnston, my brother reading a French passage from the bible, and me playing *Amazing Grace*. The church was full to capacity with local supporters as the French remain grateful to the Canadian soldiers who fought on their soil.



Photo by Dianne Neuman, DND Photographer.

As with so many burials, the clouds parted and the sun came out during the burial at the cemetery. The Last Post, Rouse and Lament were our musical tribute and it was amazing to realize that Private Johnston was being buried in the actual fields where he had fought, and within sight of where he lain for 90 years. Who knows how many others lay in those fields yet undiscovered?

It is reassuring to know that regardless of how long it has been, the military goes to incredible lengths to identify remains, to contact family and to honour those who paid the ultimate sacrifice with a burial with full military honours. I am grateful and honoured to have been given the opportunity to participate in both ceremonies, as a representative of the military and part of the Johnston family

## THE GUARDS' HUT

MWO David Snyder, CD

This article is timed with the recent return of the newly-refurbished sign from the Guards' Hut which is now mounted above all the Lieutenant-Colonels Commanding portraits in the stairwell up to the unit headquarters area. Reading this, anybody serving with the unit prior to the demise of the hut will hopefully have some amusing memories awoken while those newer guardsmen will learn yet another part of regimental history. The descriptions of related events, building appearance, and usage come from documentary evidence and recollections of former members. A separate article by Mr. Wayne Younghusband appears (pages 11-13) in this issue describing the interesting details of the sign itself.

From the Regimental History<sup>1</sup>:

The regimental rifle hut at the Connaught Rifle Range, with a floor space of 1,000 square feet, was formally opened by Lieut.-Colonel J.C. Foy, V.D., A.D.C.<sup>2</sup> on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1931. Apart from the land, no financial assistance was received from public funds, either for its construction or

maintenance. Practically all of the money was secured through the efforts of personnel of the Regiment, under the guidance and management of the active members of the Regiment's keen rifle association. Membership in this association, apart from a very few honorary members, was restricted to members of the Regiment and absence from drill or failure to attend to any military duties brought automatic expulsion from the Rifle Association.

Also from the Regimental History, "The work of Lt A.B. Coulter, Assistant Adjutant and Captain of the Rifle Association, made the hut possible as it was built with funds raised from the sale of DCRA (*Dominion of Canada Rifle Association*) Associate Membership.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Steady the Buttons Two by Two, Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards, 1999, page 137

<sup>4</sup> website of the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association (DCRA), The Canadian Marksman Magazine, Fall 1980 Edition, article by JC Thompson & M de Courcy-Ireland

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, Winger / Spring 2006 Edition, page 2 (a photo of the original elm appears on page 43)

<sup>6</sup> Steady the Buttons Two by Two, Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards, 1999, page 137

<sup>1</sup> Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards, 1948, page 225

<sup>2</sup> LCC 5 April 1930 – 4 April 1934



Although no reference could be found describing the initial appearance of this structure, former and present members of the unit who used this special structure during the 1970s and 80s can remember a simple white-washed wooden slat, red-shingled building with a generous veranda. The main floor had squeaky wooden boards with several years of paint on them, the latest covering being an ordinary grey colour, with plain white walls and single pane windows. There was a large common room - which could fit probably around forty soldiers - with aged and well-worn furnishings including a couple of chesterfields that frequently served as cots for those lucky enough to "claim" them first during a training event. There was a smaller room with weapon cleaning tables that frequently doubled as a stores, canteen, or bar. There was also a moderately-sized and equipped kitchen with running water (in the summer), a scary refrigerator and even scarier oven. There was a second floor with some small windowless rooms having slanted ceilings used mainly for storage, accessed through a trap door in the ceiling of the weapon's cleaning room. A rudimentary oil heater with an external tank was installed around 1980 but prior to that, one was either cold in the winter or had to rely on unreliable space heaters which were slaves to an unpredictable electrical system. There also used to be an outhouse associated with the building where occupants could be startled by animals or drinking pranksters.

The building's early years were reserved almost exclusively for the use of the Regimental Rifle Association which, as with our more recent history involving the unit shooting team, was a privilege to be a part of. As the unit's requirements evolved, the use of the building was opened up to all facets of the regiment to such a point that when the building was finally taken down, it was being used as a lecture area for recruits and infantry course candidates, as a command post for 1 Coy exercises, a stores area for 3 Coy, and a crowded and vibrant wet-bar / weapon cleaning area after range practices or exercises. During the 1960s to the 80s, the British Rifle Team used it to store equipment, clean weapons, and socialize over drinks in the evening

during their attendance in the summer DCRA matches. It is believed they paid an annual stipend which contributed to the upkeep of the structure.

In front of the building was the shoe tree, a large elm that had all sort of shoes nailed to it. Since the early 1960s, it was a tradition that the Captain of the British Rifle Team would nail a pair of shoes to the tree, as would any other member of that team who won the Governor General's Prize.<sup>4</sup> Several members of the GGFG would also nail shoes (often belonging to others who were then puzzled over the disappearance of their footwear) to the tree. The elm died of Dutch elm disease but was replaced by a red maple in 2005.<sup>5</sup>

There was much more willingness to commit shenanigans in the days of the Guards' Hut compared to today's army. For example, around 1980, Sergeant McLaughlin set fire to the Drill Hall fire orders on a Friday evening prior to the unit heading to Connaught. Just prior to his charge parade on Sunday afternoon at the hut, presided by Major Lomas the 2IC, a subaltern threw a t-flash into the building and thus disrupted the proceedings in a unique manner. The two individuals ended up sharing the five extra duties awarded during the summary trial. The hut was yet again assaulted by the noise of t-flashes when Sergeant Kent Boughton was in there with a parka-pocket full of prepared t-flashes, i.e., the tape had been removed and tops loosened for rapid deployment. The sudden and unwelcome noise of a hissing t-flash interrupted the conversation as the Sgt banged against his pocket in a desperate attempt to stop the fuse. A brave Samaritan pulled the pocket away from the struggling Sergeant just prior to them all going off in rapid succession. Only luck and the thickness of the winter clothing saved these two fellows from any serious injuries.

Funds for maintenance and repair were not plentiful and many unit members volunteered to do work like repairs & painting. These minimal efforts could not prevent its ultimate demise. Towards the end, it became more and more of a safety hazard. Sergeant Alex Gauthier found his legs dangling through the ceiling after breaking through the floor

of the second level before someone hustled through the trap door to haul him back up. The windows gave birth to a new crop of return-from-the-dead flies when the warm weather arrived in the spring. Sergeant Major McKenzie remembers wanting to wear a helmet inside due to the tendency of pieces to randomly fall off the walls or ceiling. After pressure from Connaught Ranges, the unit finally agreed to demolish the structure in the summer of 1994, ending a proud chapter.<sup>6</sup> A new building is near its former place now, 31 Shirley Boulevard, which is used by Public Works & Government Services.

Many thanks to those who provided memories and insights including the RSM, Captain Carleton, Captain Tessier, Captain McNulty, Marty Lane, and former RSM Falconer.

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### Memorials and Tributes

Estelle Lane

#### WITHERS, Jean Alison

Peacefully on Wednesday October 19, 2011 in Ottawa, beloved wife and soul mate of Ramsey Muir Withers. General Withers served as Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of the Regiment from June 1, 1984 until July 31, 1990.

#### Matheson, Michael Scott

Passed away on Tuesday November 22, 2011 at Mount Sinai Hospital at the age of 53. Brother of Grigadier General Mark Matheson whose military career began with the GGFG in 1977.

*May their souls and the souls of all  
the departed, rest in peace*

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### 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund

Marty Lane, CD

In the year 2022 the Regiment will be celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I know that is eleven years off but it will be upon us in no time. At the annual general meeting held on November 26, 2010 it was moved, seconded and carried that we start a fund to raise money so as to be able to commemorate this occasion properly. There have been some donations made so far. The fund will be used for special functions and to carryout special projects to commemorate the anniversary year. Persons donating to this fund will be issued an Income Tax receipt from the Association. This money will be accounted for separately and when a substantial amount is collected it will be converted into an interest bearing certificate.

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### Guards Ball

Marty Lane, CD

As mentioned earlier The Guards Ball will be held on Saturday February 11, 2011 at the Chateau Laurier. At this time we are unable to give you a cost for the Ball. The Chateau Laurier has set aside 15 rooms for this event at special rates. These rooms must be confirmed booked prior to January 11, 2012. The rates that have been quoted are as follows: Fairmont room \$179.00. Fairmont with a view \$219.00. Deluxe \$249.00, and are for single or double occupancy.

When booking ensure that you identify the group party you will attending i.e. the Governor General's Foot Guards Regimental Ball. The reservation desk number is 1-800-441-1414.

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## The CO Picture Project

Wayne Younghusband

This is a two part yarn about the Museum Committee's recently completed project to refurbish and re-hang the pictures of the Regiment's former commanding officers.



Until the late 1970's when major renovations to the Drill Hall started, pictures of former CO's adorned the walls of the Officers' Mess. They were then taken down and stored when the Regiment vacated the Drill Hall (some members may recall those CFB Rockliffe days) for a few years during the renovations. By the time the unit returned to the newly renovated Drill Hall in about 1984, the six GGFG and CH of O messes were combined into three composite messes and, with the exception of Thomas Ross, the CO pictures remained in storage. Some of the pictures were eventually hung in the north west stairwell to the orderly room.

Fast forward twenty five years to 2010 and the unit's request for the Association Museum Committee to undertake the project to refurbish the CO pictures. The Committee agreed and the first step was to find all of the pictures. Some were on the stairwell wall, some in the cupboards outside the officers' mess, and others were loose in envelopes in the orderly room. A few pictures showed significant wear and tear and required restoration using the magic of digital photography and editing.

The frames for the older large pictures were retained where possible, cleaned and the photos re-mounted on acid free matting. The post WWII pictures were changed out and put into frames of the same style and size including new matting. Then to complete the pictures a new or refurbished brass identification plaque was attached. From a total of forty four CO's to date, framed photographs of forty were completed. With Thomas Ross in the Officers' Mess, three photographs are missing:

- **John Thomas Connelly Thompson**

The son of Sir John Sparrow David Thompson, Canada's fourth Prime Minister, he saw active service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force and was decorated as a battalion commander during the First World War. He commanded from 1920 to 1921. Museum photographs of the early days will be scoured to see if we can find him. (Other suggestions welcomed.)

- **Hershell Allister Smith, DSO, MC**

A graduate of RMC, twice decorated for gallantry during Second World War while serving with the Ontario Regiment and later the Canadian Grenadier Guards. He commanded from 1947 to 1948. The CGG museum has agreed to provide a photograph.

- **Robert M Foster**

Rumored to be camera shy, but on the to-do list.

What follows is an example of 'project creep'.

As the pictures were nearing completion the problem of how and where to hang them in the stairwell was considered. Staring at the walls and pondering the options for hanging forty pictures (many with interesting facial hair) it became apparent the overall effect of the display would be rather 'plain'.

At about this time Marty Lane was bemoaning the lack of space in the Museum storeroom and as an example he hauled out the cast iron sign from the verandah roof of the Guards Hut at Connaught Ranges. The

sign took an interesting path back to the drill hall and former LCC Scott Sturgess provided the detail in a recent email:

*'Regarding the sign, I remember it on the Guards Hut at Connaught Ranges when I first joined the Regiment in 1973. When the hut was demolished in the late 80's the sign was never seen again. I assume that whoever demolished the hut decided the sign was worth keeping. At any rate during my first year as LCC, we received a letter about the sign from a militaria shop in downtown Victoria which included a photo. That summer (I think it was 1998) while visiting my folks in Victoria, I went to the shop and paid about \$200.00 to get it back. Given the weight of the thing, I had it shipped back to the Regiment via Air Canada. I guess it was in the museum until the refurbishment. That's about all I can tell you.'*

Marty wondered if there was some place the sign could be hung to get it off the storeroom floor. The sign is three feet wide by eighteen inches high and weighs about forty pounds. Hanging it in the museum, or just outside it, was considered but none of that worked. But then, there was a eureka moment. With the blessing of the Museum Committee it was agreed the sign would be restored and hung at the top of the south wall in the stairwell to be a centerpiece for the picture display.

#### **The CO Picture Project**

The hut sign before restoration. It had a coat of blue paint primer and was languishing in the museum store room since it was recovered in 1998.





In late August the sign was hung in the stairwell above the pictures and together they make an interesting display. To put the finishing touch on the work the unit has organized the installation of a new light fixture to highlight the sign and the pictures.

Association Life Member Guthrie Woods provided excellent advice and effort as we worked through the details of the restorations. Without his help it would have been a much more difficult process. Thank You Guthrie.

The Committee acknowledges also the Directorate of History and Heritage grant to fund the restoration costs.

#### **NEXT ISSUE....**

**Submissions for the next edition of the GUARDS STAR are due February 27, 2012**