

GGFG Regimental Association, Box 1212, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5R3 Regimental Website: www.footguards.ca

JUNE 2012 EDITOR: ESTELLE LANE

#### **Message from the President**

MWO (Ret) Marty Lane, CD

Here we are at the end of May and some members of the Regiment have already been at Ceremonial Guard for several weeks preparing for the coming summer. I understand from the long range weather reports that we are in for a long hot summer so be prepared. The Association executive has recently had a meeting and we discussed various items with some minor housekeeping changes to the by-laws that will be voted on at the AGM in September. More about the by-law changes latter in this issue. The other item that was reported in last Junes Guards Star was the creation of a trust fund by the Association. This has been completed and the fund is now in operation serving all members of the Guards family.

The Association is busy at this time starting preparations for the Association Regimental weekend reunion dinner. This will take place on the weekend of September 28th and 29th. The weekend will commence with the Association AGM taking place on Friday evening at 19:00 hours, followed by a meet and greet where serving and past members get together for an evening of reminiscing about their time in the Regiment and hearing about the Regiment as it is today. The dinner will be on Saturday evening preceded by a Memorial Service at the Monument in front of the Drill Hall. Let's make every attempt to fill the Drill Hall for the dinner on Saturday evening. The timings for all the events will be posted at a later date when everything is finalized.

Once again I remind everyone that the Regiment will be celebrating, in 10 short years, its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It seems like a long way off but in reality when you are planning for something like this, 10 years is a short time. The Association

executive would like to hear from the members of any anniversary projects that you might like to see happen. If you have any ideas please let the executive know so that we can discuss them and plan ahead as to costing these events and ideas on how we can raise funds to make it happen. We have started an anniversary fund with some donations received and deposited in the bank under a separate anniversary heading.

In closing I would like on behalf of the Association executive wish all members a safe and enjoyable summer and to those away representing the Regiment on courses or instructing remember you are a Member of the Finest Regiment in Canada.

#### UP THE GUARDS!!!!!

#### **Message from the LCol Comd**

LCol Derek Cheff, CD, AdeC

Fellow Guardsman,

A demanding training year was punctuated last night by respective company smokers that I believe ended-up merging into one. But, although this is the official end of the training year, some officers and soldiers have been tasked to Ceremonial Guard for about three weeks now and others are already off to other training courses.

Since my last article, the training year has remained packed with a wide range of tasks from the soldier level up to where I am sitting. On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, we hosted the Colonel of the Regiment, His Excellency "Colonel" David Johnston for a shortnotice visit. Colonel David advised me that he thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to chat with the soldiers of the Regiment. He was successful in making the rounds with many soldiers during the

smoker, and I was struck by his very personal interest in our soldiers. He clearly wanted to know what motivates reservists and why we do what we do. We will continue to keep the door open for the Colonel of the Regiment and I expect him to stop by for another visit next year.

Of course on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, the Regiment bid farewell to Chief Warrant Officer Art Mckenzie. as he handed over to Chief Warrant Officer David Snyder. The parade was presided over by the Deputy Commander of 33 Canadian Brigade Group, Lieutenant Colonel Rob Foster, who was accompanied by the newly appointed Brigade Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Mitch Hepburn. Aside from the speeches, the parade was short and efficient, with the soldiers very-well turned out. I would like to echo a couple of comments I made that evening about Chief Warrant Officer Mckenzie and his contribution to the Regiment for so many years. Like his predecessors, Art has been an absolutely stellar Sergeant Major. On a personal level, he provided me with excellent advice and support throughout our time together; and I hold a great deal of admiration for him as a colleague and fellow guardsman. Throughout his term, his knowledge and very personal interest in the welfare of the soldiers of the Regiment has ensured that we maximized training and professional development opportunities, which in turn enabled all of us to deliver on the myriad of demands the Army places upon the Regiment. Chief Warrant Officer McKenzie is moving to the Brigade Headquarters, with intent to "serve whatever capacity he is asked". I am heartened to know the Army will not lose the expertise, motivation, and vast experience of a great leader.

The outlook for the next training year is that it will be very demanding, but professionally challenging. We are in a good situation regarding planning, as I expect the company commanders to back brief me on their plans in early July.

In general, be prepared to conduct a significant amount of collective training, with the Regiment as the lead for several exercises. While we will be high-tempo, we are working hard to

ensure that we bring together battle task standards and training objectives together in a manner that ensure progressive and cohesive training that fits with the overall Brigade plan. All of us are aware to varying degrees that the Army, like the Canadian Forces at large, is in another period of transformation and restructuring. Right now this is only noise, so everyone should focus on the task at hand. I don't expect the Regiment to feel any significant direct effects of any transformation activities next year, and we are sufficiently funded to achieve our mission. But with this in mind, it is important in today's environment to remain flexible, patient and ready to deploy at short-notice. To this end, personal readiness and fitness need to be on the brains of everyone in the Regiment.

Looking at the foreground, I will hand over command of the Regiment next September. In light of this sobering reality, I look forward to taking full advantage of my remaining months in command. I expect that over the summer season to see the soldiers and officers of the Regiment who are flung from Ottawa to Gagetown to Meaford. Between now and then, I bid you all a safe and productive summer.

As a final note, on behalf of the Regiment, I pass on our eternal thanks to our families and supporters who I hope will be given an extra level of attention by our serving members over the "quieter" summer months.

Up the Guards!

#### **Message from the RSM**

CWO D. Snyder, CD

As I mentioned on parade, I was very proud to be able to stand in front of the unit on May 29<sup>th</sup> with the outgoing Sergeant Major's pace stick tucked under my arm. I will work diligently and tirelessly to keep this family a strong infantry regiment. I will help give the soldiers, musicians, and support staff the confidence and abilities they will need to meet their future challenges.

I enjoyed my three years as Drill Sergeant Major working with the Second-in-Command Major MacLean, and as Headquarters Company Sergeant Major working with its Officer Commanding, Major Lynam. I would like to thank those two for their willingness to communicate and their support. Although it will not be a long time, I also look forward to being part of the command team with Lieutenant Colonel Cheff despite his misplaced remark about my navigation skills. He must have had me confused with somebody else. I will also enthusiastically continue to work and play with the backbone of the unit - the Sergeants-Majors, Colour Sergeants, and Sergeants.

The unit is happy to see former Sergeant-Major, current Major Hladik return from a successful and eventful mission in South Sudan and eagerly await his many stories.

Once again, I wish everyone a happy and successful summer and urge those on course or task to distinguish themselves and remember to uphold the high standards the unit expects of them.

#### **Musical Notes from the Band**

LCol Fran Chilton-Mackay, OMM, MSM, CD

The Band had a busy April and May performing on several occasions throughout the Nation's Capital, including The Army Ball at the Hilton Lac Leamy, the Annual ANZAC Day Ceremony at the Canadian War Museum, the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Investiture at Rideau Hall and Gala at the NAC, and several Mess Dinners and parades about town.

The band's performance at the Army Ball, "On Her Majesty's Secret Service", featured music from James Bond, celebrating both the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen and the golden anniversary of the first James Bond film. Huge thanks to Sgt Julie Hacquard, who with the aid of some extremely clever students from De La Salle High School, produced a very slick accompanying Bond video of the band, which was shown on the screens while the band marched around live. The finale piece, "Live

and Let Die," accompanied by vocalist Cpl Craig Kennedy of the RCMP, brought the house down.

Our latest small ensemble, The Celtic Ensemble has been receiving rave reviews about town. Members include Cpls Dan Beaulac, Lisa Bebyck and Angela Hardy and our stalwart Scots Guards addition to our band, Gordon Tait. They performed at the VIP reception for the Army Ball, the visit to the Regiment by the Governor General on 22 May and most recently aboard ship on the Ottawa River for the 33 Canadian Brigade Group Commander's dinner. The Governor General thoroughly enjoyed the group and remarked he was keen to have them perform on occasion at Rideau Hall!

Eleven members of the band have been tasked to the Band of the Ceremonial Guard for the summer and two members have been selected as instructors at the School of Music in Borden. As for the new secondary pastime of most of the band members, running, our own Cpl Hélène Fortier ran the Marathon at the Ottawa Race Weekend in her personal best time of 3:45, which has qualified her for the Boston Marathon in 2013!

Several engagements are still forecasted through the end of June including the Kingston Garrison Ball and the band will once again provide the music at the Fort Frontenac Staff College in Kingston in July marking the end of the year long Reserve Army Operations course.

#### W.J. Keating Club

CSgt Gord Birkinshaw, CD

Our annual Master Corporal's Night was held on March 24<sup>th</sup>, to welcome our Master Corporals and to say thank you for all their efforts and hard work during the training year. This informal event was held in the mess, with much conversation, Beers of the World, Horse Racing and other games enjoyed by all. The Top Master Corporal of the Year, as voted by the senior NCOs, was also awarded, this year to MCpl Dave Carr. Well done!

Our next event was the Cut Knife Hill Dinner, held on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The Mess Functions Committee, under Sgt Bonneville, worked hard to make the dinner a success, despite some confusion in numbers of those attending, and a few unannounced arrivals at the door. Hats off to Lolacher's for making 72 meals out of the 53 ordered! The dinner was attended by both the Honorary Colonel and Honorary LColonel, and all those dining were treated to an excellent address by our guest of honour, Dr. (formerly Sgt) Steve Harris, Canadian Forces Chief Historian at DHH. Thanks for your words, Steve – they were much appreciated and enjoyed.

The next Mess event was the Regimental Birthday. While in the past few years, it has been celebrated with a BBQ in the Mess for members and their families, this year the entertainment committee has decided to revisit the idea of a couples event at a local restaurant.

#### **GGFG Regimental Association**

The following was resurrected from the Museum archives.

## Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Guards Association

The first meeting of the Guards Association was held at the Drill Hall on Friday evening November 15, 1945. Approximately 75 members were present.

The importance of forming an Association was outlined by Lt Cols Wurtele, Anglin, Bishop and Majors Brown and Wood, John Gunn and Harold Rubin, both ex members of the Guards spoke of what membership in our Regiment had meant to them.

The meeting was then thrown open to a general discussion. During this period the problems of rehabilitation were uppermost. It was decided that a committee be formed to assist members of the Association upon their return to civil life.

Entertainment was also a matter left in the hands of the committee.

G.B.C. Fenton moved that the period of discussion be closed. This was seconded by J.P.R. Boyer.

The Chairman then called for the election of officers.

The following were elected:

Honourary President: Lt. Col. E.M. Smith, D.S.O.

President: Nathan Green
Secretary: Claude Brown
Treasurer: Danny Harrington

General Committee: Henry Short

John Gannon
Emmett O'Connell
Harold Rubin
George Simpson
Emile Deslauriers

It was then moved by Lt. Col. Wurtele and seconded by Henry Short that the committee be permitted to add to their numbers as required. Passed unanimously

The question of fees was discussed, those present feeling that three dollars a year would be a suitable amount, subject to the approval of the committee to increase or decrease fees as necessary.

The Chairman then moved that a vote of thanks be extended to Lt.Col. Hannaford for the use of the men's mess for the meeting. A further vote of thanks was extended to the Ladies' Auxiliary who have done so much for the Regiment during the war years and also for their kindness in supplying refreshments at this meeting. Both motions were carried unanimously

James Peck then moved that the meeting be adjourned. This was seconded by John Gannon. Carried Adjournment took place at 10.20 p.m.

Following the meeting, supper consisting of chicken pies, coffee and cake was very capably served by Mrs. E.M. Smith and Mrs. O. Burke of the Ladies' Auxiliary. To the hard work of these two ladies a great deal of the success of this meeting was due. For not only were they responsible for there being refreshments, but they also ensured the smooth functioning of the supper by serving the meal

# **CF member helps evacuate** wounded after Sudanese air strike in South Sudan

Published On Thu May 10, 2012 on DND website

By Capt Mark Peebles

## This story comes from <u>Operation</u> <u>SOPRANO</u>

On Sunday evening, 15 April, a jet dropped bombs on a rural village, killing seven and wounding 14. Within hours, a helicopter with foreigners, including a CF member, inside loads some of the wounded and departs for a nearby hospital.

Was this in Kandahar province? Helmand, perhaps? No.

The incident in question happened in Mayom, South Sudan and the CF member was Major Morgan Hladik, a Military Liaison Officer for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Major Hladik is one of 14 CF members on Operation *SOPRANO* who are working with the UN to support peace in a new and increasingly wartorn country.

Major Hladik, a reserve officer with the Governor General's Foot Guards in Ottawa, was at a UN base in Bentiu – a rural town in Unity State bordering Sudan – when he heard reports that Sudanese Air Force jets had bombed Mayom approximately 75 kilometres to the west. Two of the bombs had landed inside the UN County Support Base compound, damaging the generator, radio equipment and buildings.



Major Morgan Hladik

(second from right) confers with other UN personnel outside a UN helicopter in Mayom, South Sudan on 16 April, 2012. Maj Hladik and the UN team were in Mayom to survey the damage in the town and evacuate wounded civilians following a Sudan Air Force attack on 15 April.

wounded child plays

with a bouncy ball given to her by Maj Hladik while being evacuated by UN helicopter from Mayom, South Sudan to a hospital in nearby Bentiu on 16 April, 2012. She and others were wounded when the Sudanese Air Force bombed the town on 15 April.

As a Military Liaison Officer (MLO), Maj Hladik's job is to assess and report such bombings. He accompanied the UNMISS Force Deputy Commander and other UN personnel who flew out to Mayom via UN helicopter from Bentiu within hours of the attack to inspect the damage.

He wasn't the only MLO in Bentiu, and he could have passed on the assignment. Up to that point, he had been to all but one bomb site. But Maj Hladik volunteered and ensured he was on the flight manifest.

"I'm a combat arms officer so I'm prepared in many respects for these kinds of assignments and look forward to them," he says. "This is what I deployed to do."

Within a few minutes upon arriving in Mayom, a large crowd formed around the UN team as a truck arrived carrying civilians suffering shrapnel wounds from the bomb attack. While other UN staff surveyed the bomb site, Maj Hladik coordinated the loading of wounded civilians on to the helicopter.

While Maj Hladik notes that the scene was calm in Mayom despite the bombing attack, he adds that this is not uncommon in a land which has seen so much warfare.

"I have been on the scene a few times within minutes of the bombs falling and there is no screaming or wailing, just focused quick actions to take care of the wounded and to assist us in getting information," he says. "The South Sudanese do not get too excited over things like this. After so many years of civil war and fighting they just get on with their lives."

With Maj Hladik's notes completed and the wounded civilians loaded on board, the UN helicopter took off and sped back to Bentiu where UN vehicles waited to take the wounded to a

civilian hospital in town. As a result of the team's work, the UN put out a news release condemning the attack which was carried by media worldwide and forced the government of Sudan to address the incident.

As well, UNMISS is planning to move the County Support Base in Mayom further away from the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) facilities to lower the risk of attack.

Despite the exceptional nature of the incident – UN facilities are seldom attacked – Maj Hladik says the air strikes have almost a daily occurrence in South Sudan since the beginning of April. He adds that while the local population has generally remained calm in the face of such violence he sees a rising sense of fear where he is, with many sending their families away and foreign merchants also leaving.

Maj Hladik says the mission has yet to complete its first year on the ground, so it's hard to measure its impact in South Sudan. Even so, he continues to go out patrolling every day and building the contacts and relations that will assist South Sudan as the mission matures. He says that with time and cultivation of these relationships, MLOs like him will be able to more effectively help the SPLA grow a professional standing army as well as helping the South Sudanese government develop as a viable country in spite of the ongoing conflict with its northern neighbor.



Major Kirk Millenor (a former member of the GGFG) being presented his 1<sup>st</sup> bar to his CD at the CEF Command Headquarters H&A (Thanks to WO Ed Storey, CD)

#### **Proposed Bylaw Change**

Wayne Younghusband, CD

The Association executive is proposing an amendment to our bylaws for consideration by the membership at the 2012 Annual General Meeting. The proposed change is to Section 31, Financial Signing Authority.

This is the existing version of Section 31:

#### 31 Financial Signing Authority

31.1 The financial signing authority of the Corporation shall be the President, Vice-President Social Activities and Membership, and the Chief Financial Officer of the Regimental Association. All cheques shall carry two of the three authorized signatures.

Because the signing authority is named positions the availability of two of the three positions can be a problem. For example, at the present time the Vice-President Social Activities position is vacant, so that means there are only two signing officers available. As all cheques require two signors, this can be a problem if one of the two remaining signing authorities is not available for an extended period of time.

The proposal is to remove the Vice-President Social Activities as a designated position and replace it with a member of the executive as appointed by the executive committee.

#### **Proposed change:**

31.1 The financial signing authority of the Corporation shall be the President, the Chief Financial Officer, and one other member of the Executive Committee as appointed by the Executive Committee. All cheques shall carry two of the three authorized signatures.

#### **REUNION DINNER**

The Association will be holding its 66<sup>th</sup> annual reunion dinner weekend on the weekend of September 28-29, 2012. The weekend will kick off with the Association holding the AGM on Friday the 28<sup>th</sup> commencing at 19:00 hrs. This will be followed by a meet and greet in the Officers Mess. On Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> there will be a Memorial Service at the Statue in front of the Drill Hall at 18:00 followed by the dinner at 19:00. The cost for this weekend will be \$50.00 for both the meet and greet and dinner. The meet and greet only will cost \$10.00. Lets make a huge effort to attend this weekend and get together with serving members, former members and Second War Veterans from the Regiment.

#### Regimental Foot Guards Association Dinner Reunion 2012

CWO(RSM) ret Bob Dodd CD

In 1946 members of the GGFG returned from overseas and formed an Association. The purpose was to instill a Regimental Family for past and serving members. Many members did not return to enjoy the freedoms we share today.

The Association has been called upon by the Regiment and other organizations for help and support as well as members of the Regiment who may have fallen on difficult times.

Members that I served with, have continued this Regimental Spirit over the years and return to renew old friendships and share memories of days gone by. Living in Georgia, U.S.A. it is not always possible for me to attend every year...but we must collectively make an effort to attend these reunions and support the Association to ensure the survival of the spirit of the Association.

Many of us learned a great deal from our time in the Guards which has helped us in our civilian occupations as well as life in general. The lessons learned and the people we met will never be forgotten. We stood together on parade, waded through mud, braved the elements in all kinds of training, and yes we shared a few drinks throughout the years.

As we age we must remember our history in the Guards and what a better time to share these memories than to attend the Reunion Dinner in September.

I will be attending this year to renew friendships.....remember fallen comrades, share some old stories we may have heard many times before. I was in the Guards for 20 years, some of you may have surpassed my tenure and I applaud you, andt the memories I have are priceless to me. The people who touched my life during my service to the Regiment without question will remain in my memories forever.

I know the Regimental Band will be well represented..both past and present.

Serving members and those connected to the Ceremonial Guard should make every effort to attend. I hope you will join me this year and meet and greet both past and present members to celebrate and remember.

Yes we will always remember...and tell old stories and YES share a drink or two.

Come join us in September - I would appreciate hearing from you. I would hope that some of our veterans will be in attendance so I can thank them for their service to the Regiment, for without them we would not have an Association.

#### THE BATTLEFIELD TOUR

CWO A. McKenzie, CD

From April 4-13 I took part in a Battlefield Tour of France with a little bit of time at the end in London, England. The tour was organized by Capt. Rob Duncan and his wife Marianne. There were a total of 29 people on the tour with most having a connection to the regiment in some way or at least a connection to the military.

My wife and I flew to Paris a couple of days prior to the tour so we did some personal touring of the city prior to the official tour. On the evening of April 4 we hopped on our tour bus for an evening out at a local restaurant where we introduced ourselves to the other travelers.

The next day we did a bus tour of Paris which included a walk through Notre Dame Cathedral and a climb up the Eifel Tower. Our first sighting of the 5000 Canadian students that were overseas for the Vimy Ridge Ceremony occurred today. We would see them constantly throughout our tour as they also did some touring before attending Vimy Ridge.

The meat of the tour began the next day as we left Paris and continued to our first stop the Beny-Sur-Mer Cemetery which contains mostly Canadian soldiers killed in the early stages of the Second World War mainly during the Battle of Caen in July 1944. I found the burial plots of Sgt Norman Dennis and Lt Emmett Patrick Joseph O'Dell Finn of the Governor General's Foot Guards.



Next we were off to Juno Beach, Canada's sector for the Allied invasion of German occupied France in the Normandy landings on 6 June 1944. There we were given a tour of the beach area as well as the Juno Beach Centre which opened in June, 2003.



We then moved on to the cliffs at Arromanche which formed part of Gold Beach where the British Forces landed during the Normandy invasion. From the cliffs we had a great view of the beach and also observed a monument to British Forces located on the cliff.

Our next stop moved us a lot further back in history as we stopped at Bayeux to tour the Tapestry of Bayeux Museum. The tapestry is 70 metres long and depicts the events leading up to the Norman conquest of England concerning William, Duke of Normandy and Harold, Earl of Wessex, later King of England and culminating in the Battle of Hastings in 1066. It is speculated that the tapestry was created around 1077. This was our final tourist stop of the day and we stayed the night in Caen.

Our first stop the next day was at Pegasus Bridge where on D-day the British 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne hit their target within 40 metres and took the bridge within 10 minutes with only 2 losses. The bridge itself has been moved to an area about 2 km from the original site and now forms part of the Pegasus Museum.

We then moved on to the Mémorial de Caen which is a museum and war memorial to conflict in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with emphasis on the Second World War. Much of the outdoor displays emphasize peace including a large statue of a pistol with its barrel tied in a knot and the word "non-violence" engraved in the base.

Our next stop was in Dieppe and we were given free rein for the most part to walk around and explore those areas that interested us most. My first stop was the Dieppe Museum which is in an old theatre on loan from the town and is quite run down. Despite its need for repairs the museum does a very good job of telling the story of the Dieppe Raid. It includes a moving video of the veterans, nurses and inhabitants in telling the story of the raid through what they experienced. They also have a good display of the regiments which took part in the raid. I then walked along the beach and took note of all the memorials placed there, one for every regiment that took part in the raid. There was also a Dieppe Cemetery which I visited and noted that a Guardsman from the Coldstream Guards was buried there who had died in the Battle of Dunkirk in 1940. Our evening was spent in a hotel just on the outskirts of Dieppe.



Our first stop the next day was at the Treport Military Cemetery where we visited the gravesite of one of Marianne's relative's that worked at the No. 2 Canadian General hospital during World War I. This was one of a number of stops that we made throughout the tour at cemeteries that contained the burial places of relatives of people on the tour. I am sure that all concerned were very appreciative that we were able to do this due to the fact that we were considered a private tour and therefore able to dictate our stops a little more easily than a normal bus tour.

Our next stop was Amiens where we toured the Notre Dame Cathedral and drove past the prison that was the location of OP Jericho. Op Jericho was an Allied bombing mission on the Amiens Prison in an attempt to free French resistance and political prisoners. Of the 717 prisoners, 102 were killed, 74 wounded, and 258 escaped, including 79 Resistance and political prisoners, although two thirds of the escapees were recaptured. The place where the bombs hit can still be seen in the walls of the prison.

We then moved on for a quick stop at Albert and observed the Notre Dame de Brebieres Cathedral where during the First World War the statue of the Virgin Mary that was on the top of the Cathedral was knocked over by German bombings but was still attached but leaning. It was thought that if the statue fell over then the war would be lost so the Royal Engineers wired the statue in place until it could be fully repaired following the war.

We continued our journey stopping next at the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial. It is considered a National Historic Park of Canada along with the Canadian National Vimy Memorial. The Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial dedicated to the commemoration of Dominion of Newfoundland forces members who were killed during World War I. The memorial ground encompasses the area where, on July 1, 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, Newfoundland Regiment fought and where within 30 minutes the regiment was pretty well wiped out. The date of July 1 in Newfoundland, as well as being Canada Day, is also recognized as Memorial Day given the deep impact that Beaumont-Hamel had on a generation of Newfoundlanders.

For lunch we visited the Ulster Tower Memorial located on the outskirts of Thiepval. The Tower stands close to the site of the old German front line in July 1916, on ground fought over by the 9th Royal Irish Rifles on 1st July 1916. It commemorates the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division who fought not only here but in other battles and areas during the war. There is also a very good display of the various Irish regiments throughout history including the Irish Guards. The

site is run by an elderly couple from Belfast who makes a great soup and sandwich lunch.

We next moved on to the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme which is a major British monument to 72,191 missing British and South African men who died in the Battles of the Somme between 1915 and 1918 who have no known grave.

Then it was onto the Courcelette Memorial which is a Canadian war memorial that commemorates the actions of the Canadian Corps in the final two and a half months of the Somme offensive in the First World War. The site is a small square park with gardens of hedges, and maple trees. A 'Y' shaped pathway leads from the entrance to stone seats at several places around the outer edge looking out at the former battlefield. In the centre of the park the grey granite block monument is set on a low circular flagstone terrace.

The next two nights we spent in Arras which was fine by me as it had a good bar and was close to the local pub.

The next morning those that chose to do so departed our hotel at 04:50. We arrived at Vimy Ridge in time to give a personal toast at 05:30, exactly 95 years from the time Canadian Corps attack commenced. My personal toast was to the 2nd Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force (the Iron Second). We returned to the hotel for breakfast and then were back out on the road to Vimy Ridge at 07:30. We had a quick 20 minutes at the memorial itself then visited the trench and the visitor's Welcome Centre.

Next we had a quick stop at Cabaret Rouge Cemetery to observe the gravesite from which the Unknown Soldier was exhumed and that now rests at the National War Memorial. We then moved on to Notre Dame de Lorette, a French cemetery that holds more than 40,000 French soldiers from the First World War. The only exception to this WW I rule are that if a family lost two of a grandfather, father or son in the two World Wars then they are all buried together here. Our next option was to

attend the official Vimy Ridge ceremony that was occurring involving the Governor General, politicians and many dignitaries along with the 5000 Canadian students previously mentioned. A recce revealed that the viewing area for the general public was small, the day's weather was cold and rainy and my wife was feeling quite ill so we skipped the ceremony. In fact only about 8 of the 29 on the trip attended and I was told that by them that it was a moving ceremony. One of the couple's asked me if we had another Sergeant Major in the Regiment as they saw someone with a GGFG forage cap and sash that had a good drill voice. I told them that was Sgt Van Veen, who along with MCpl Orton, had taken part in the parade.

The next day we started out at Vimy Ridge where we had a much longer time to look around and observe not only the magnificent memorial but all the flowers, crosses and messages that were placed the day before. The size and meaning of the memorial was truly overwhelming.

Our route was then to travel north east toward Ypres, Belgium but unbeknownst to me we headed north to Pas de Calais and the Noeux-les-Mines Communal Cemetery, the final resting place of Major Okill Massey Learmonth. This stop was definitely the highlight of the trip for me given that as a Victoria Cross winner from the Regiment it held a special meaning. All serving and former members of the Regiment had our picture taken with the gravestone and Rob Duncan generously gave me a Guards pin to place on the gravesite.



Front row: Syd Treml and Art McKenzie

2<sup>nd</sup> row: Dave Goddard, Carolyn Percy-Searle, Rob Duncan and Michel Simard.

Then it was on to Ypres where we toured the downtown before heading out to the Passchendaele Museum which was a nice museum explaining the war fought in this area but it was undergoing renovations which made the viewing area cramped and another large group was there at the same time.

We then took in the Tyne Cot Cemetery which has 11,954 Commonwealth soldiers buried there, of which 8,367 are unnamed and 966 are Canadians. Our next stop was to be the Essex Farm but we accidently stumbled onto the Canadian Passchendaele Memorial which is a Canadian war memorial that commemorates the actions of the Canadian Corps in the Second Battle of Passchendaele. The site was the location of Crest Farm which was an objective captured by the 4th Canadian Division during the assault of 30 October 1917.

Next we took a quick camera stop at the St Julien Memorial which commemorates the

Canadian First Division's participation in the Second Battle of Ypres which included the defence against the first poison gas attacks along the Western Front. It is a rectangular monument with the head and shoulders of a Canadian soldier with his head bowed mounted on top. We also stopped at German Cemetery Langemarck which approximately 44,000 graves with 24,000 being buried in a mass grave known as the Comrades Grave. Our final stop of the day was at the Essex Farm Cemetery which during the First World War was an advanced dressing station. Major John McCrae, the author of *In Flanders Fields*, is said to have composed the poem at this site following the death of his friend, Alexis Helmer. There is plaque at the cemetery commemorating the famous poet.

That evening we took in the Remembrance Service at the Menin Gate in Ypres. The gate is a commemoration of British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the Ypres Salient of the First World War and whose graves are unknown. The service is a simple remembrance ceremony where Last Post and Reveille are played and selected groups lay wreaths. The evening we were there wreaths were placed by the Country of Canada, Canadian Veterans, the Canadian students that were there as part of the Vimy Ridge ceremony and two private families. Psalms were read by a British veteran and a PPCLI serving member.

The next day was our final day in France and we started off visiting the La Couple Museum. The museum resides inside and around the old mining quarry where, in 1943, the German Army began work on the second of several giant hardened bunkers, intended for launching 40-50 V2 rockets at London each day. Inside the museum, the "Historical Centre about the war and development of the rocket," you will now find exhibits that document the German planning and construction of the bunker, the Nazi occupation of France, man's conquest of space, and one example of a surviving A4/V2 rocket.

The rest of the day we spent traveling to Calais where we caught the ferry to Dover and then jumped on a bus and traveled to London. Over the next two days we toured London and visited various spots including St Paul's Cathedral, the Imperial War Museum, the Cabinet War Rooms and of course the Changing of the Guard ceremony. For the Changing of the Guard we did not go to Buckingham Palace instead we went to the forecourt of Wellington Barracks and watched the New Guard prepare to march off which involves a full ceremony in itself including a mini band concert.

In the end this was a very positive experience and at times was emotional and tiring. We hit just about all the major sites that I had hoped to see and it whets my appetite for more battle field touring in the future. It was also good to connect with some fellow guardsmen I had not seen in a while like Michel Simard, Sid Treml and Dave Goddard as well as meet some new friends both from the Guards and elsewhere. Our tour guide Colin was a wealth of knowledge and always kept the group in good spirits. Rob and Marianne are to be congratulated on organizing a great trip and talk is we may try again in a couple of years but include some of Italy as well.

#### **Memorials and Tributes**

Estelle Lane

#### **FORTIER, Eunice Mary**

Peacefully, on March 9, 2012, at the age of 89. Beloved wife of the late Marcel Fortier and sisterin-law of Guy and Betty Fortier.

#### LACELLE, Patricia Jean

Passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family Thursday, April 12, 2012 at the age of 85. Beloved wife of the late Captain Rene Lacelle, and dear mother of Sgt (R) Richard Lacelle and Lt (R) Michael Lacelle.

#### CHARTER, Arthur Robert C58530

Peacefully on Tuesday, April 24, 2012 age 94. Art enlisted in 1940 and was promoted to Sergeant in 1944 and served overseas with 21 CAR(GGFG). Upon his return to Canada he continued working with the Regiment as RQMS until his discharge in

1973. He was a life member of the Sergeants Mess and the Foot Guards Association.

#### **BROCKWAY**, Jill (Mabel)

The family is sad to announce her passing on May 17, 2012 in Duncan, BC. Beloved mother of John Brockway, a former member of the GGFG Regimental Band.

#### LAMOTHE, Rodolphe

Passed away on Monday May 21, 2012 at the age of 90. He was a WWII veteran and a life member of the Foot Guards Association.

#### AUBREY, George. Captain (R)

Honoured member of the Ottawa Fire Department and the Governor General's Foot Guards. George passed away peacefully in his home, after suffering with cancer, on Tuesday, May 29, 2012 at the age of 78 years. George joined the GGFG about 1950 and played Euphonium in the band. He rose to CWO before being commissioned as Lieutenant and Director of Music in December 1970. He retired as Captain in September 1977. Probably the most notable event in which he led the band was travelling to Philadelphia in 1976 as part of the Canadian contribution to the USA Bicentennial. (Thanks to Jim Milne for the information)

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

### 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 ten 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.

#### NEXT ISSUE....

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