



THE FALCON

ISSUE NO. 9

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA REGIMENTAL FAMILY

SUMMER 2006

Memorial Wall Honouring Veterans Unveiled at Queen's Park



Photo by Adam Bernard

Pachino Landing remembered by 1st Canadian Brigade

by The Old Comrades Association

On July 10 this year, 63 years after the landings on the beaches of Sicily in 1943, the veterans of the battalions of the 1st Canadian Brigade got together to reminisce and to renew friendships. The occasion was the Annual Memorial Service held each year since the war ended by the Hastings and Prince Edward Regimental Association in their armoury in Belleville. For years the RCR had been in attendance. However, the 48th Highlanders had never participated in the mid-morning ceremony which started at 1000 hours. The distance from Toronto meant getting up at 0530 and our veterans had long since stopped getting up on army time. This year was to be the exception, bringing together veterans of the three battalions for the first time in sixty years.

'Plough Jockeys' and 'Pukkas' greeted the arrival of the 48th Highlander contingent with open arms. One Plough Jockey jibed: "Just like the 'Glamour Boys', always late." To which a Highlander retorted: "Early enough to save your bacon as usual." And so the friendly banter started and continued throughout the morning.

Sunday September 17, 2006

A memorial honouring Canadian veterans was unveiled at Queen's Park Sunday Sept. 17 and those who visit the monument will get to trace Canada's military history dating back to Confederation.

The 30-metre granite wall has scenes from Canada's military past etched in the stone, highlighting the valiant efforts of men and women in uniform, including in peacetime, from 1867 up to the country's current mission in Afghanistan.

Major-General Richard Rohmer (Ret.) co-chaired the committee that oversaw the project and said this memorial will not only be an important symbol to those who have and are currently serving, but to younger generations.

"School kids come and they can walk quickly to the memorial and see this whole panoply of pictures and they are very carefully chosen. We had one of the great, great Canadian historians, Dr. Jack Granatstein, help us with the pictures and it is really beautiful," he explained.

"[It's] quite impressive and it is educational because people can look at it and say, 'Ah, that's what things looked like in World War I in the trenches.'"

Rohmer said the unveiling of this

Exercise Vigilant Guardian 2006

by WD Rioux

EX VIGILANT GUARDIAN was a ten-day exercise that focused on full spectrum operations. The members of the 48th Highlanders were attached to TF 32-06 D Coy and tested on previous years training, while deployed into the area of "Matayaya". During this exercise the Regiment was tasked out with various duties including Force Protection, Framework Patrolling, Air Mobile and Cordon and Search.

The first tasking for the unit was Force Protection for the Forward Operating Base where members were tasked with the internal base quick reaction force (QRF), front gate security or observation posts. While in this unstable country the FOB was routinely affected by angry crowds, drive by shootings, Improvised Explosive Devices and perimeter breaches. During one occasion the 48th had just de-escalated a situation at the front gate with an angry crowd. No sooner did the crowd disperse then a section commander was hit by sniper fire. The force protection alerted the Command Post and treated the soldier on the scene. The QRF was deployed and was able to capture the shooter who was escorted and

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Greetings, fellow Highlanders! It's that time again. September is here, and we are starting a new training year. Let me bring you up to speed on where we stand.

TRAINING

The Regiment is looking forward to a new training year. We will continue to focus on Full Spectrum Operations, but at the Platoon and Company level this year. This means that we will be training our soldiers to conduct kinetic (war-fighting) operations, and non-kinetic (peace support and humanitarian) operations in a complex (urban) environment. Much of our training will be conducted in built-up / urban environments. We have trained in the abandoned town of Edgar for the last 2 years, and will be heading back there again this year. This training is new and challenging for all our soldiers. This FSO training is the way that the entire army is heading – leadership courses are now presenting candidates with scenarios where they have to lead presence patrols, conduct camp security and conduct vehicle check points rather than lead section attacks and site defensive positions.

The Regiment has just returned from our annual summer exercise held in Petawawa. We had 73 soldiers participating in the training. The soldiers lived in FOB's (Forward Operating Bases) constructed in the training areas. From there they conducted presence patrols, did a heliborne raid, and were part of the FOB security operations. All the soldiers that I spoke to thoroughly enjoyed the FTX, and are looking forward to its successor next summer, when the FOB's and operations will be conducted off the base.

We sent 4 soldiers on the PLQ Course – this is the first leadership course – this summer, and I am pleased to let you know that Cpl Corea, Cpl Park, Cpl Leandro and Cpl Thomson all successfully passed this course. Well done!

Deployments – we currently have 5 soldiers deployed overseas. WO Kwok, Cpl Brown, Cpl Markowski, and Cpl Petrovic are currently in Afghanistan on OP Athena (TF 03-06). They deployed in mid-May, and are expected to return to Canada just prior to Christmas. Maj. McEwen is currently in Sierra Leone as an advisor to their army. He deployed in late May, and should be back sometime in late Nov or early Dec. We wish them the best, hope that they have some great experiences, and trust that they will come back ready to pass

on some of their knowledge and new skills to the rest of the soldiers. Please remember these soldiers and their families while they are overseas.

Capt Vic Goldman has recently retired from the Forces, as he hit the magical number of 60 this summer. Vic was a key player at the 32CBG battle school for the past several years, and as a former Sr. NCO, he had the ability to juggle many courses, instructors, candidates, training schedules, and the like. He will be missed in this capacity. However, he's not down for the count yet. Vic will be assuming command of the 48th Highlanders Cadet Corps in late October or early November of this year. That means that he can hang on for another 5 years if he wants to.

RECRUITING

Recruiting will continue to be a major effort this year. We currently have in excess of 40 personnel “somewhere in the system” at CFRC. We had 38 soldiers conduct their entry level courses this past summer, and hope to have about the same number again for this upcoming training year. The Regiment has been identified by the Comd 32CBG as a “Unit to grow”, so we should see an increase in the number of course vacancies that we receive. To clarify, there is no restriction on the number of personnel that we can recruit, but there are a “hard” number of vacancies on the entry level courses that are assigned to each unit. The Brigade Headquarters manages these vacancies to ensure that all units receive an equitable (not equal) number of vacancies, based on unit strength. The aim of 32CBG is to have all units at about the same strength, to ensure that the brigade remains balanced.

POSTINGS

For those of you who call down to Moss Park Armoury, you will know that Sgt Benson no longer answers the phone. Both she and her husband were posted to Winnipeg this summer. In her stead, Sgt Kanash has been posted in as our Chief Clerk. He is already settling in and is looking forward to working with us for the next few years.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Future significant upcoming events include the following:

Sat 21 Oct 06 - WO & Sgt's Annual Mess Dinner - Invitations have been mailed to all former Sr NCO's.

Sat 04 Nov 06 - OCA Mt Pleasant Cemetery Service (followed by the WO & Sgt's Annual Mess Meeting)

Sat 11 Nov 06 - Regimental Remembrance Day Ceremony to be held at Queen's Park.
- OCA dinner of Remembrance

Fri 24 Nov 06 - Change of RSM Parade.
- My successor has not been confirmed by LFCAHQ to date. This is why we have not announced who will be the next RSM, but we are proceeding with the planning for this parade.

Please mark these dates on your calendars. It is extremely important that all branches of the Regimental Family continue to support the Active Regiment. One of our strengths is that we have a strong Regimental Family that supports the active soldiers. I encourage you all to make every effort to come out to these events, ceremonies and parades.

I also want to take a minute to thank all members of the Regimental Family for their support over the last 4 years. In all likelihood, this will be my last FALCON article as RSM. My term comes to an end on 24 Nov 06. During my time as RSM, all branches of the Regimental Family have given me outstanding support. I appreciate all your hard work and dedication to keep our Regiment strong. I especially want to acknowledge the “heads of the branches” for their efforts in making my job easier. I knew that I could count on their support of all the decisions that I made and the actions that I took. I also want to thank you all for supporting and welcoming Ruth and the girls over the past 4 years. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as RSM, and trust that I have helped to make our Regiment better. Thanks again.

That's about it for now, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the active Regiment.

DILEAS GU BRATH

9C, OUT.

*R.A. ALKEMA
CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER
REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR
48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA*

Memorial Wall Unveiled

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monument has come at a good time as the efforts of Canadian service men and women are more recognized now than they have been in the recent past because of Canada's military presence in Afghanistan.

"The whole thing comes together at the right time," he said.

The ceremony to unveil the new monument was preceded by one of the largest military parades in Toronto since the Second World War. The regimental procession which began at noon, travelled from Fort York up University Avenue to Queen's Park.

The parade consisted of more than one thousand troops from Canada's Forces including the army, navy and air force, more than a thousand Cadets, hundreds of veterans (including 48th veterans and members of the OCA), a 15-gun salute and an inspection of the Guard of Honour by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario at 2pm. A fly past was also part of the important ceremony that included vintage aircraft and present day CF 18 fighters and Griffon helicopters.

The honour guard included Sgt Vienneau, Mcpl Baptiste, Mcpl Leandro.

"We're here to pay tribute to the millions of Canadian men and women who bravely fought to protect our way of life and our democracy," Premier Dalton McGuinty said. "Your sacrifices, your carelessness of self, spared generations from oppression and war - and we are forever grateful."

This issue of the FALCON published by:

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If you would like to contribute to future issues please e-mail your stories and pictures to: falcon48@sympatico.ca or call Adam Bernard @ 416-792-9447

THANK YOU to those who've submitted articles, letters, ideas and photos.

Ex Vigilant Guardian

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The weather during the 1st two days of Exercise Vigilant Guardian. Ex VG photos by Sgt Vienneau.



The front gate of forward operating base Steadfast.



Members of the 48th searching locals and their vehicle before allowing entry to the camp.

processed by the Military Police.

The next tasking was for the 48th to participate in a company Cordon and Search in a small town. The operation started with a set of company orders and battle procedure. For a number of new soldiers, this was the first time they conducted an operation of this size, and to heighten the operation, they boarded CH-146 griffons for a helicopter insertion into the town. The night prior D Coy deployed recce elements to define the position and pre position marksmen for the operation. Through outstanding coordination and cooperation the unit conducted a very quick and precise operation to look for high value targets that were trying to escape by blending in with the local population. The result was the capture of 20 insurgents and 6 high value targets. D Coy unfortunately encountered the risk taken during contemporary operations and suffered 3 casualties from an IED that was hidden within the town.

The final gig for the 48th was to conduct presence patrols within the Area of Operations (AOR). Throughout this tasking they encountered everything from individuals selling weapons in the market to people with broken down vehicles. During the urban patrolling the unit moved through city streets and market places, looking for persons of interest and completing reports and returns for headquarters. They were able to identify individuals that were possibly working the black market and obtained information on weapons caches and persons of interest.

Throughout this entire exercise the 48th Highlanders of Canada were always at a high level of readiness and carried out the responsibilities given to them. In the next coming months the Regiment will be faced with more fast paced and difficult training in order to be again ready for the next concentration EX VALIANT GUARDIAN 2007.

DILEAS!



Mcpl Leandro, Hldr Cappella, and the remainder of 2 section.



Hldr Baker, 2 Lt Lorella, Mcpl Leandro, Hldrs Cappella, Frank & Kim, take a break during their patrol.



Sgt Vienneau & Cpl Duff



Cpl Duff's chalk practicing hel ops.



Contour flying at 100 knots



Delta coy re-organizing post hel ops.



Cpl Thompson, Mcpl Leandro, Hldrs Park and Baker.



The 48th carrying on the "salots" tradition at the end of the ex.

Pachino Landing Day

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Any observer could tell that the respect for each other was as strong as ever.

Attendance by the 48th was the result of a series of happy circumstances. HLCol Geordie Beal had been e-mailing Major Bob Nuttall back and forth for about a year. Bob had served with the 1st Battalion of the 48th in northern Italy and Holland and was the platoon commander of 7 Platoon when Geordie's dad had been A Company Commander. The two had never met in person and when Bob mentioned the Pachino day event, Geordie decided that this was a great opportunity to meet. When he mentioned to Harry Wignall, the President of our Old Comrades Association, that he was going to Belleville Harry immediately sent out a broadcast to the OCA. Fifteen Highlanders responded and the day was on.

Attending from the 48th were four from the 1st Battalion – Alex Scagnetti, Sid Redgrave, Gord Outhwaite and Herb Pike. Also there were the three most recent Presidents of the OCA, Harry Wignall, Tom White and Tom Thompson. Our OCA Drill Team formed a Colour Party under Dave Imbeault. Similar numbers attended from the RCR and the H&PE, including the Presidents of their Associations, Major Bob Burns of the 1000 Islands Branch The RCR and Major Howard Adamson of the H&PE Regimental Association. Amazingly Charles Hunter, the last living veteran of 2nd Field Regiment that provided artillery support to the 1st Brigade, was there too. This made the reunion of the First Brigade all the more complete.

The Memorial Service was held in the Armoury, due to the extremely hot and muggy day and the threat of rain. Members formed up on the floor in two platoons with Highlanders, RCR and Hasty Ps intermingled, reflecting perhaps unconsciously, that they had all worn the Red Patch as part of the 1st Canadian Brigade. Padre Sid Horne of the Hasty Ps, gave a brief sermon. Then each unit laid a wreath. For the RCR, one veteran and his Association President jointly did the honours as did Herb Pike and Harry Wignall for the 48th Highlanders. Mrs. Harry Brott, wife of Sgt Harry Brott, killed near Apeldoorn in 1945, laid the wreath for the Hastings & Prince Edward Regiment.

Following the ceremony all broke for a spaghetti and meat sauce lunch at which veterans of the four regiments continued to reconnect and share stories. It made for a wonderful day.

The next week, Major Bob Nuttall sent an e-mail summing it up.

“Dear Sir: (Geordie) – You, Herb, and the other members of the 48th (sorry, no nominal roll) have given to the Hasty Pees, something they have been longing for – ‘the coming together of our three regiments of the first bde of the first div.’ As an aging member of the ‘fine brigade’, I want to offer my personal thanks to you and the comrades of the 48th for making my day unforgettable. Also, I have been made officially aware of the personal feelings of many of the Hastys, one in particular, John (Porky) Thomas, a devoted eighty-six year old ‘plough jockey’. Unfortunately, but necessarily so, I don’t have to remind anyone that so many of our ‘originals’ are unable to attend despite being free to do so. Fortunately there does exist a nucleus of younger, dedicated sons, daughters. Like minded troops who willingly carry on for us.

Dileas.....Pro Patria.....Paratas”

BOB A COMPANY 7 PLATOON 48TH

From the Archives - Events of Autumns Past

by HLCol Geordie Beal

55 Years Ago – On 20 October 1951 the advance party, Bravo Company, 1st Canadian Highland Battalion, 27th Canadian Infantry Brigade embarked and left port on Board SS *Columbia*, bound for service in Germany. They were to be part of the first military element of NATO, formed just two years prior in April 1949. The Brigade of 6670 troops consisted of three battalions, one of which, the Highland Battalion, was raised exclusively from the five reserve Highland regiments across Canada. The 48th Highlanders was tasked to raise Bravo Company for the battalion. When the full battalion embarked at Quebec City on 1 December with them were six officers and a full company of men plus one of two pipers and two drummers all proudly wearing the uniform of the 48th Highlanders. The other piper, who had departed earlier with the advance party, would greet them in their new home in Germany. The piper was Bob Taylor. Following his service with 27 Brigade Bob returned to the regiment and to the Pipe band, rising to Warrant Officer. He parades still with us still, having joined the militia in June 1945.

Sixty-one years of service, a record seldom seen in the regiment or the reserves.

60 Years Ago – In June 1946 the cadets received their current name, the *48th Highlanders Cadet Corps*. The official change in name came in time for the cadets to march with the Regiment on the annual Memorial parade that fall. The Rotary Club of Canada had founded the Rotary Youth Training Corps (Cadet Corps 1625) in 1940 as a contribution to the war-time efforts and the youth of Toronto. The corps, allied with the 48th Highlanders, was led by twenty-five Rotary Club members who had served in The First World War with the regiment. These Highlanders came out of retirement to volunteer and to train as instructors. More than 500 cadets graduated from the cadets and joined the regular army for service overseas and in Canada.

90 Years Ago – On 26 September 1916 at 1235 hours Canadian troops began their attack at The Somme. They had moved to The Somme just three weeks earlier on 01 September with the goals of preventing the Germans from moving troops to the Russian front and relieving the pressure from the French who were under threat at Verdun. There was no uplifting goal, just Sir Douglas Haig's stated purpose of killing Germans. The first wave penetrated over a kilometre, stopping just short of a major trench complex. Then the second wave including the 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders) followed under the support of machine gun sweeps and the continuation of a rolling barrage. Immediately the Highlanders hit a trench, fully manned by Germans who had occupied it unseen. They cleared it unaided. Others advanced in controlled line, taking orders by arm signals in the deafening roar and eliminating machine gun posts that emerged after the barrage had passed. They continued to advance and fight until 1945 hours then dug in. General Ludendorff of the German defence staff confirmed later that the series of attacks at The Somme had left his army completely exhausted. But, to the men of the 15th Battalion who suffered 117 dead, 223 wounded in this battle, and over 500 casualties while at The Somme, the effort seemed to lack a victory.

115 Years Ago – On 16 October 1891, the *48th Battalion (Highlanders)* was gazetted. General Orders 19. No.4 specified “eight companies of the Active Militia of the strength of 42 non-commissioned officers and men per company, to be formed into a battalion wearing the Highland Dress.”

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Toronto's last Highland presence before the formation of the 48th Highlanders had been the Toronto Company of Highland Rifles, attached to the Queen's Own Rifles and disbanded in 1868. Early in 1891 Alexander Fraser, journalist and Scottish author, together with Captain Wilbur Henderson, a Scot who had served in the 34th Battalion in Toronto, called together a select few influential Scots. They agreed to act immediately. On 3 July they asked Captain John Irvine Davidson, a leading businessman and a Captain in the 10th Royal Grenadiers of Toronto, to be the first Commanding Officer. Initial deputations to the government in Ottawa met with failure as the recently elected Conservative government under Sir John A. MacDonald argued that another unit would be too expensive, despite private funds raised in support of the Battalion by Fraser's committee. Undeterred, they enlisted Toronto Mayor E.F. Clarke and Alderman Saunders who passed a resolution of council in support, while others talked directly to their MPs. On July 24, after the Minister of Finance proposed to "remove the financial difficulty", the second deputation to Ottawa gained agreement.

By 11 August, the regimental committee had selected the "Old Davidson" tartan and a regimental crest, a "falcon's head erased", which was part of Davidson's family crest. The motto chosen was "Dileas gu brath", Gaelic for "Faithful forever". A scarlet dress uniform, based in part on that of the Gordon Highlanders of Aberdeenshire, Davidson's place of birth, would have blue facings rather than the yellow of Highland regiments in Scotland, to recognize that all Canadian militia regiments had been granted the right to the Royal Blue by Her Majesty Queen Victoria. The name the committee proposed was *The Queen's Highlanders*, however by the end of summer they were to learn that the Militia Department had decided that this name was not available, but that a vacancy existed at number 48 in the numbers for battalions. Accordingly, the regiment became the *48th Battalion (Highlanders)*.

Recruiting and training went on through the summer without waiting for the official gazetting. When was announced on 16 October the 48th Highlanders were ready. As recorded in *The Falcon* in 1949 by Drummer Alexander Munro, "At 8 p.m. the Regiment marched down south to the first street turning east [King St]. The Piper playing the Alma they marched on sidewalks two deep until we reached the Gates of the College, which is where the Royal Alex is now, turning left up the gravel road and into the Old Upper Canada College, taken upstairs and dismissed."

Old Comrades Association

by Harry Wignall

We have a problem, we have a strong, dedicated membership who are very Dileas in spirit, but are declining in numbers. We need new members who have served or are serving in the Regiment who have the DILEAS SPIRIT and wish to keep it going. The OLD in Comrades Association does not mean you have to be fifty and older or retired to be a member. It means you are, or have been a member of the 48th Highlanders of Canada or a past member of the 48th Cadet Corps. COMRADES speaks for itself.

The OCA Drill Team & Colour Party are looking for younger members to ease the burden on our WWII Veterans who still continue to parade and carry the Colours. They usually meet the first Tuesday of each month in the evening. The Drill Team & Colour Party is invited to, and attend, a number of events during the year. They include: "The D Day Dodgers" in Orillia, "The Regimental Church Parade", "The Scottish Festival" in Orillia, "The Highland Tat-too" at the RCL. Br. 614, "The Warriors Day Parade" in Toronto, "The Regimental Remembrance Parade" and other events. The Drill Team & Colour Party have placed first in many of these events. This year the Colour Party took first place in the Orillia Scottish Festival. Other events this year included "Pachino Landing Remembered" in Belleville, and the "Warriors Day Parade" in Coe Hill.

The OCA Life Members are a bunch of Highlanders, who have reached that fifty and over mark, but still have that Dileas Spirit and a lot of good stories to tell. Herb, our Chairman and Veteran of the Year for 2005, swears by Viagra, he states "it's the best sleeping pill ever made", when he can't sleep, he takes two and sleeps all night. He must have taken two the night before we went to Coe Hill. The Lifers meet the first Tuesday of each month at 11:59



Dave Crook, Syd & Pat Bryatt



Marlene Jeffries & Wally Moore



Nancy Beal, Herb Pike, Geordie Beal, Oats, Joan Pike



Millie Dance, Joan Pike, Shirley Fisher



Ron Alkama, Gord Outhwaite, Alex Scagnetti



A bunch of guys were whooping it up.



O.C.A. Colour Party at Belleville



Herb Pike, Harry Wignall, Tom White



Before Parade at Belleville



Tommy & Frank - End of day.

Old Comrades Association

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AM for a 12:30 meeting with the exception of July & August. Unfortunately this is the group where we have the largest decline in membership, due mainly to natural causes. They are well remembered, and we remember them well

Coe Hill is a very small dot on a large map. Tommy Thompson assured me it was there, because he dealt with their local hardware store in years gone by. They boast having the largest number of Military Vehicles on a Warriors Day Parade in the province, and it's true. They date from WWII staff cars, trucks, carriers and guns to present day armoured vehicles including some from the Korean War. The parade formed up at the local LCBO (the newest and largest building in town) and paraded to the Fair Grounds at the opposite end. The Bancroft Legion Pipe Band led, followed by the Massed Legion Colours and then the OCA Colour Party & Drill Team under Dave Imbeault. They looked great. Our vets, Gord Outhwaite, Herb Pike, yours truly and a local vet from the town, fell in behind the Drill Team. We were the only veterans to march, the others rode. Gord had to do the odd skip & jump on the downhill, but otherwise, it went well. We were followed by Militia Units from the Hasty P's and the Ontario Tank and then came the vehicles. Following a long wait for the vehicles to park, and a short service, we returned to the Legion for a little libation with friends and an excellent roast beef dinner. Although it rained on the way there and back, the weather cooperated for the event.

The Regimental Picnic sponsored by the Continuing Sergeants and the OCA was held on July 8th on the grounds of the Royal Canadian Legion in Acton on the shores of Fairy Lake. What a great place to hold a picnic. Dave Crooke did an excellent job of paving the way for the Highlanders and their families, and the Legion responded by receiving us with open arms. The first Highlander to arrive on the scene was Alex

Scagnetti from California, and as it was still early, Gord, Lyndsay, Shirley and I took Alex into town for a late breakfast. By the time we returned, things were getting well under way.

We had a lot of familiar faces in attendance, including last years veteran of the year and his beautiful wife Joan, also Sid & Pat Byatt from Peterborough Country, RSM Alkama & Family, Karen Barker & Family, and just too many more to name in a short space. There were not quite as many in attendance this year, but that's OK, because we were able to talk about you with fewer interruptions. Try to make it next year though as we still enjoy your company. Nick Birch was there and took his usual amount of photos. Hopefully, we can get some of them printed in this Falcon.

OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION
MEMORIAL SERVICE
MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY
Saturday, November 4th, 2006 at 1030 hrs.

DRESS FOR BOTH PARADES:
Blues & Grays with Glengarry & Medals

48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA
REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE
QUEEN'S PARK
Saturday, November 11th, 2006 at 1000 hrs.
Bus for OCA Members will depart
Moss Park Armoury at 0930 hrs.

OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION
MEMORIAL DINNER
115TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
Saturday, November 11th, 2006 at 1800 hrs.
York Reception Centre
1100 Millwood Road, Toronto
TICKETS - \$45.00 PER PERSON

TICKETS FOR MEMORIAL DINNER:
Make cheques or money orders payable to
48TH HIGHLANDERS O.C.A.
c/o Box 174
71 Underhill Drive
Don Mills, Ontario, M3A 2J8

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LETTERS FROM MAJOR McEWEN (SIERRA LEONE)

submitted by Douglass Chappell

29 June, 2006

48 Highlanders,

I know I promised to send a quick letter covering how things are going over here. I think I now have enough stories to at least amuse you for a few minutes. The team I am working with is fairly relaxed and professional. I am partnered up with a PPCLI MWO, two Brits and two Scots in my BAST (Brigade Advisory Team) although three of them are rotating out shortly. All have been through Iraq, and are not overly excitable.

So far we've managed to drive away from any protests, rallies' etc that plague this country so I haven't had to defend myself yet. However our compound was broken into last week and I think we sent a message to the locals about what our response 'could be' that night. All the guards that were supposed to be on duty that night were either absent or asleep. All are in jail right now. We had fired one of the soldiers who was working in our compound earlier in the day because of some minor thefts that he either took part in or failed to prevent. Anyhow, at least everyone has been reminded that we are still armed with ROEs that allow us to defend ourselves fairly robustly.

I am heading out on some Ambush Patrols tonight with the school primarily so I can get a feel for jungle patrolling before I go up to the Forward Operating Bases and start patrolling the border. The current LCol seems to want to keep us at the Battle School instead of with the operational Battalions. It makes sense since we are primarily training teams. However I didn't come to Africa to teach JLCs for 6 months so in couple of weeks I am going to start an FTX with the next Coy Gp to rotate to the border and will accompany them out for the relief in place. If anything interesting is going to happen it should be during or right after the RIP so I want to be there during the critical phases.

Last week we took part in a 20 km race. It was supposed to be just webbing but the BAST changed the rules to be minimum 15 kg which meant small packs for those that had them. The Instructors and students left one at a time at three minute intervals and to make sure there was no Buffoonery (I think

you can figure what that implies). I passed 3 guys rather quickly but I didn't pass anyone else until the last mile when I passed about three more. It took me 3 hours, 24 minutes and I thought I had gone rather slowly. I drank three litres of water enroute and still my muscles were incredibly dehydrated. I guess I wasn't really acclimatized yet. Capt Campbell Close, Royal Scots – Black Watch, passed me and finished in 2:24.

I've been to the officer's mess a couple of times here and I will never complain about our mess again. Granted you can still smoke inside the mess here but you have to be careful the roof doesn't burn down. The Sr NCO's Mess and the Officers Mess alternate using the generator so only one has cold beer on any given night. Oh well, at least they stock good beer, Heineken primarily, and for the locals, STAR.

I hope everyone is doing well and the unit performed well on CAC this summer. If everything goes according to plan I should be returning to Canada around Dec 8th so save me a seat the Christmas Dinner. Dileas,

JOHN

24 August, 2006

Hello everyone,

I promised to write when I had something interesting to write about. Unfortunately unless you want to include killing the odd snake, spider bites and getting stranded at the Liberian Border nothing much has happened. A few weeks ago I joined the Sierra Leone Army on some border patrols. As the UN is basically running Liberia right now there isn't much of a threat however just getting there is half the fun. I was heading to one meeting at the only legal crossing point but couldn't get our vehicles across a river because three other vehicles were stuck in and the water levels were rising so we turned around and stopped at a village and slept in something called a Baffa, basically an open air shelter. We bribed the villagers with some soccer balls, Canadian pins, balloons and flags. The next day I finally got to meet our UN counterparts, the Namibians, whose CO kept complaining about the patrolling his men had to do. I got the feeling that he hadn't walked very far in a very long time and was more upset with having to sign more patrol reports. The younger officers were quite good and when we met at the various 'illegal' crossing points they were in pretty good spirits. The illegal

crossing points are all dug-out canoes, none of which have outriggers, so the crossing was a little interesting. Technically I guess Canada invaded Liberia several times that week but since we had one of their immigration ministers with us I didn't see the harm in it. That is until I realized the UN troops left their weapons behind when they came to Sierra Leone and we brought ours into Liberia. If you've seen Lord of War, Liberia is nothing like that. I did not see any night fighters in Dallas Cowboy Cheerleader Uniforms anywhere.

I've spent most of my time trying to get the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) that I work with to come up with their own solutions to problems. For the most part they try to mimic what Canada, the US and Britain do even though they don't have any of the kit. For example, just this week I saw an IED lecture where not only do they not have any of the EW counter measures, they don't even have the radios to call in or run a proper cordon. Not to mention they don't have a mine threat, let alone an IED threat. However, why let reality ruin a perfectly good lesson plan. The rest of my time is spent convincing them that a coup is not necessarily the correct response to every situation.

Haven't had to draw my weapon for over 6 weeks now so it is pretty calm and quiet as they say in every briefing. We just went through a minor nuisance of a water shortage in Freetown that had most people worried about riots which is surprising because it rains every day. The next problem is a bunch of former rebels in Liberia are being evicted from rubber plantations along the border. Not that we expect much trouble but the locals are getting nervous and are no longer turning in their weapons to the UNDP. After that it should be smooth sailing until the tour is done. I imagine most of you are at CAC and have fun with that. As summer winds down and the training year begins, don't forget to write me off for my MLOC. I promise I'll do it. Does RPG count as firing a Carl G...? My team is back up to strength with Highlanders again. We just received in WO2 MacReady, 1st Bn Royal Scots so again, more Balmorals than Berets. Anyhow, life is good, the beer is occasionally cold and I got a new Land Rover this week so what more can I want. Cheers.

JOHN



Pipe Band performing in Warsaw.

THE PIPES AND DRUMS GO TO POLAND

by MWO Iain Lang CD and
Pipe Major CWO Alexander Dewar MMM CD

The summer and fall of 2006 have been busy. We have participated in several annual performances as well as a couple of unique opportunities.

The Pipes & Drums were invited by the Royal Regiment of Canada to accompany the Royals' Band to Poland this year. A trip that had been a dream of Lt Col Perchell for some time and had been long in the making.

After much preparation with rehearsals and meetings, to decide what clothing would be worn at rehearsals and what uniforms would be worn for various performances; we finally departed Toronto on the evening of 20 June.

Being over prepared and briefed, we found right off the bat that we had plenty of spare time at the airport before our flight would depart. Of course during this lull some of the passengers, namely pipe band personnel, killed some or most of this time at the departure lounge. Once on the aircraft there were some seating changes that transpired that were quite favorable, if you had rank and seniority. The Pipe Major along with the Drum Major and some members of the Royals were moved to first class. There is no need to go into details of the benefits of these seating arrangements.



Pipers tuning up in Gdynia while LCol Patterson listens.



Reception in Gdynia. CWO Dewar, Piper Willis, Dmr Bridge, Sgt , Cpl Forsyth, WO Dewar, Sgt Dewar, MCpl Dewar, Drmr Grattan, MWO Fullerton, Danielle Bourre.



Rehearsal Break in Krakow. L to R: Piper Willis, MWO Fullerton, Drmr Grattan, MCpl Dewar, Sgt Dewar, Drmr Bridge, CWO Dear, WO Dewar, Cpl Forsyth, Danielle Bourre.



48th and Royals marching in Krakow, Poland.

During the day of the 25th, quite a number of members went on a side trip to visit the concentration camp at Auschwitz. From all accounts this was a very moving experience. Because space was limited, others visited Wawel Castle in Krakow instead. This was a most interesting tour.

Very early on the 26th, we packed up and departed for Gdansk by way of Warsaw to change buses. This was a very long drive requiring numerous stops because our buses had no washrooms. For some reason we had to stop many times! We finally arrived about midnight. The hotel was kind enough to have the kitchen stay open for us to have a meal. More importantly, they kept the lounge open with, believe it or not, FREE BEER.

We had some free time the next day to visit the downtown area of Gdynia, which is quite old and well preserved. A number of members took in as much as they could see from where they were sitting at a local establishment in the square. We also had a tour of a naval base and had an opportunity to visit two vessels, one surface ship and one submarine. Both of these vessels were from the Soviet era.

The Bands put on two performances while in the North for the next two days. The first concert on the 27th in Gdynia was aboard a WWII destroyer named the *ORP Blyskawica* for a Twinning Ceremony with *HMCS Haida*. Both of these ships served together as part of the RN 10th Destroyer Flotilla in 1944.

The next day, the Bands put on a second concert at the waterfront. We had an hour and a half to visit the beach on the Baltic Sea. Again, many members took in as much as they could from where they were seated at a local establishment.

On the 29th, we packed up and left for the long journey back to Warsaw, which would be our final stop before returning home.

On the 30th, the Bands performed in the old part of Warsaw in the square just outside Zamkowy Castle.

We played at the Canadian Embassy on July 1st for the Canada Day celebrations. The Canadian Ambassador was extremely pleased with the performances by both bands. We mingled with the guests between performances and devoured some of the food and drink. (Very Nice) After the celebrations were over, the bands were invited to stay for a BBQ and some more refreshments until quite late in the evening. This was a perfect way to end a good tour.

We packed up on the 2nd for the journey home.

There were quite a few stops at museums and drive by tours throughout our visit to Poland, which may have been exciting for some, but the time could have been better spent resting between performances or doing what any Highlander would normally do on a band trip when free time is available.

All in all this was a very good trip and we were all able to see quite a bit of Poland that most of us would probably not otherwise have had the opportunity to see. Our performances were very well received wherever we played.

We thank the Royal Regiment of Canada for including us on this tour of Poland.

With only a couple weeks to reorganize the Pipes and Drums were once again on an airplane, this time to Edmonton, Alberta for the Alberta Tattoo from July 16th to July 23rd, which is co-produced by MWO Larry Fullerton.

A fictional war veteran named Albert, created for the 2005 Alberta Centennial Tattoo, returned the central figure in the Alberta Tattoo. Albert's story weaves together theatrical elements of acting, dancing, singing, fireworks and video with aboriginal performances, military brass bands, pipe bands, military rappelling and the national Army Gun Run Team. The story begins with an aging Albert visiting a modern-day military base where he sees Canadian soldiers training for Afghanistan. The opening act included the national Army Gun Run Team's gun race.

Albert's memories take the audience on a musical journey from the battle at Vimy



Above and below: Pipe Band performing in Warsaw.



New recruits for the Pipe Band in Warsaw, Poland. All Photos taken by Cpl Igor Loutsiouk, Royal Regiment of Canada. More can be seen at <http://www.agws.ca/IGOR/>

Ridge, to his return home from WWI, and all his stops along the way back to Vimy Ridge for the unveiling of the war memorial two decades later on July 26th, 1936. Albert encounters many people in his travels, including Charlotte Wood of Gunn, Alberta, who was the first mother to receive the Memorial Cross in honour of her sons who served in WWI, five of whom were killed.

Pipe Bands in the Tattoo included five members the Calgary Highlanders, The Lord Strathcona's Horse (The Royal Canadians, Edmonton and District, the Calgary Police Pipe Major, and the Edmonton Police Service.

For a second year the Edmonton Police Service Pipes and Drums hosted the 48th Pipes and Drums back to their Sgt's Mess at Police Headquarters. The mess is a unique operation and a welcome site after the hot opening Parade for Edmonton's Capital EX.

As in previous summers, the Pipes and Drums once again teamed up with the Band of the Royal Regiment of Canada to produce a show to be performed at the Fergus Scottish Festival Tattoo on the Friday evening of the Fergus weekend. We always receive enthusiastic appreciation from the Tattoo audience and both bands enjoy the venue. Many band members camp at the park through the weekend to participate in the other events of the Fergus Highland Games.

August also brings the CNE Warriors Day Parade and Tattoo. While The Regiment is in Petawawa on exercise, the Pipes and Drums parade veterans into the CNE from Fort York Armoury. The parade is immediately followed by a small Tattoo involving bands from 32 Brigade. This Tattoo is also co-produced by MWO Fullerton.

At the time this article was written the Pipes and Drums are scheduled to travel to Loon Mountain, New Hampshire as the guest band of the New Hampshire Highland Games, from September 20th to the 23rd. The 48th Pipes and Drums were regular guests at this festival a number of years ago. Further details of our return to Loon Mountain will be presented in the next edition of the Falcon.

Upcoming events this fall include the opening Toronto Maple Leafs hockey game and the RCMI Concert in October.

As a reminder, we are running an evening for anyone interested in learning the bagpipes or the drums most Friday evenings throughout the year. If you or anyone you know is interested contact MWO Lang or WO Dewar for more information. (ilang@sympatico.ca)

DILEAS!

From the Vaults of the 48th Museum

by WO Anthony Percival

Drums have kept armies marching in step for a millennia and form the backbone of any band. The drums presented in the 48th Museum tell a tale of the 48th Highlanders in peace and war.

The first drums of the 48th were purchased from local music stores and were not of a military design. Prior to the First World War and until the 1950's, military style rope drums were played. In the post war, rope drums have given way to rod tension drums.

Three types of drums have been used by the various bands of the 48th Highlanders and are still being used today. Bass drums set the tempo, snare or side drums compliment the tune, and the tenor drums in the manner in which they are played create an eye-catching show.

This drum was one of a set of 12 side drums, 2 tenor drums and a bass drum, a gift to the Regiment by Lt. R.A. Ross in 1929. Lt. Ross had served with the 15th Battalion during the First World War. All these drums were manufactured and hand-embazoned with the First World War Battle Honours by Henry Potter of London, suppliers of musical instruments to the British and Colonial armies since the mid-1800's.

Early in the Second World War the 1st Battalion of the 48th Highlanders of Canada departed overseas. The Band carried this complete set of drums, less four of the side drums which were left in the care of the 2nd Battalion back in Canada.

Early in June 1940, the 48th Highlanders landed in France to bolster the British Expeditionary Force but within days the front collapsed and a general retreat was ordered. The Unit's heavy equipment, transport and musical instruments were destroyed to hasten the withdrawal and the prized set of drums

burned to prevent them falling into enemy hands.

Back in England after their brief foray to France in June 1940, the 48th Pipes & Drums were without drums! Their previous set had been destroyed with other equipment just prior to the Regiment's evacuation from France.

Later that year Mr. Ernest F. Cooper of the Gillette Razor Company of Great Britain presented the band with a new

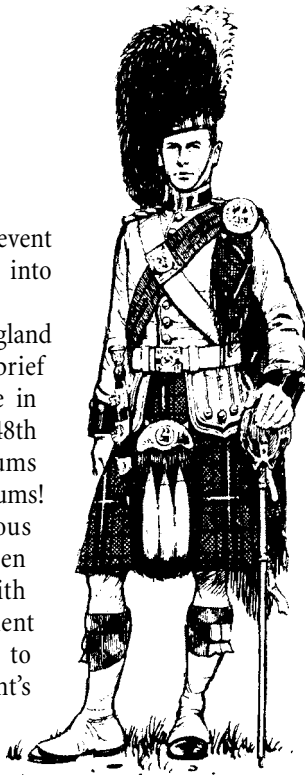
set of eight side drums, two tenor drums and a bass drum. The set was manufactured by Henry Potter & Co. and was emblazoned with the Battle Honours from the First World War. In addition a new Battle Honour appeared on these 1940 drums: "South Africa 1899-1900" which was granted to the Regiment in 1933.

This set of drums served the 48th Highlanders all through Sicily, Italy, Northwest

Europe and its return to Canada in 1945. The set continued to serve the home unit into the 1960's along with the 4 surviving Drums of the "Ross" set which had been left in Canada.

The drum shown here is a "Guards' Style" drum (so called because it is 19" inches in diameter) as opposed to the "Line Regiments' Style" (18" diameter). On the inside of the drum shell appear the names of two drummers who used this drum in the 1950's, J. Spears and L. Tucker. Also of note is the antiquated "hook" snare suspension on the side of the drum.

For half-century the Bands of the 48th Highlanders of Canada have played the rope



drum through two World Wars and into the early 1960's. These drums not only required skill to play but their approach to maintain them is of an art form in itself.

A broken drumhead meant the complete dismantling of the drum and some weeks before it would again become playable. The heads had to be soaked and slowly stretched over the drum shell, which could take days to achieve a perfectly smooth surface.

The ropes when new had to be pre-stretched prior to reassembling the drum. When everything had been put back together there was still weeks of work taking up the slack in the rope and gradually increasing the tension of the drum head.

All this work has been eliminated on modern drums with ready to play drum heads and screw tightened rods.

...This is but a taste of what you will discover at the 48th Highlanders Museum open Tues & Wed 10 to 3 or on the web at www.48highlanders.com/museum.htm



48th Side Drum, Presented by Lt. Ross, 1929, Manufactured by Henry Potter & Co.



submitted by Sgt Frank MacKay

SCHEDULE OF THE 48TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA REGIMENTAL FAMILY

Tue 3 Oct	O.C.A. Exec. Meeting 10:30 am, Life Members Meeting 12:30 pm, Drill Team Meeting 7:30 pm, Sergeant's Mess
Wed 11 Oct	O.C.A. Fall Colour Bus Tour & Boat Cruise
Thur 2 Nov	O.C.A. Life Members Meeting 12:30 pm, Drill Team Meeting 7:30 pm, Sergeant's Mess
Sat 4 Nov	Old Comrades Association Memorial Service Mount Pleasant Cemetery Saturday, November 4th, 2006 at 1030 hrs.
Sat 11 Nov	Remembrance Day Service at Queens Park 10:00 am, O.C.A. bus will depart from Moss Park at 9:30.
Sat 11 Nov	O.C.A. Memorial Dinner, 115th Anniversary Edition at 18:00 hrs. York Reception Centre, 1100 Millwood Road, tickets \$45 pp
Fri 24 Nov	Change of RSM Parade.

LAST POST

The following Highlanders passed away recently:

James Miller	June 6, 2006	Toronto
Charles Jeremy Sams	June 15, 2006	Toronto
Murray Percival Parmiter	June 28, 2006	Trenton
Arthur (Art) Johnson	July 24, 2006	Toronto
John "Jack" Hughes	July 27, 2006	Toronto
Hugh Douglas MacLeod	August 5, 2006	Toronto
Edward George Gane	August 9, 2006	Toronto
George Mason	August 2006	Toronto
Naury Rosenblath	August 2006	Toronto
G. Ron Pallet	August 2006	Toronto
William (Bill) Shackleton	August 22, 2006	Godrich
James Cooperwhite	August 22, 2006	Milton
Al Harris	August 24, 2006	Barrie
Harry Wooley		Mississauga

May they rest in peace, Dileas Gu Brath

- SUBMITTED BY HARRY WIGNALL
OCA PRESIDENT

CONFINED TO BARRACKS

1) SUNNYBROOK HOSPITAL

Only 2 left – others have past away.

- Nelson Liston, K3E, Door code 4589 Room 21
- Norm McMurrick, K3W, Room 33

2) BAYCREST HOSPITAL – 3560 BATHURST ST

We have 2 members in this hospital:

- Lloyd Tucker (7th floor)
- Dave Logan (6th floor)

3) SPECIAL CARE UNITS

- Jack Pickering
- Keith (K. G.) Jackson

4) AT HOME – PROBLEMS GETTING AROUND

- Ed Forest
- W. (Curly) Carothers
- G. E. Colton
- Don McCron
- Jack McKenna

Visit when you can, they will enjoy your company

- TOMMY THOMPSON

November 25th Toronto, ON. ST. ANDREW'S BALL, Fairmont Royal York Hotel – Dinner followed by Ceilidh Dancing to the Pipes & Drums of the 48th Highlanders of Canada and Scottish Country Dancing with Bobby Brown & The Scottish Accent. For tickets and information go to www.standrews-society.ca or call Michael Noble at 416-449-8070.