

The Garden Party

What is The Garden Party?

Canada has a long tradition of Garden Parties. Inspired by the Garden Parties of Buckingham Palace, for more than 100 years many Governors General, Lieutenant Governors, and Garrison Commanders have held Garden Parties inviting the leaders and leading citizens of their constituencies.

London Ontario has been a Garrison Town virtually from its founding. Noted local brewer and MP for London, Sir John Carling, identified three turning points generating the rise of London: the location of the district court and administration in London in 1826; the stationing of the Imperial military garrison there in 1838; and the arrival of the railway in 1853. A military establishment has been central to the development and prosperity of London from its inception.

Soldiers and their dependents added to London's population and growth directly, both while on active service and also in other employment if they remained post service. They added indirectly to the population and the economy by being consumers of a wide range of services and businesses. Related businesses were established from which the city still benefits.

The commanders of Wolseley Barracks have a long tradition of inviting civilian leaders (Political, Business, Institutional, etc) to a Garden Party, usually at the Officers' Mess, where they could mix with the military command staff. This was part of a process to could foster and strengthen the links between the civilian and military communities.

Soldiers based out of and trained in London were called to serve in:

- 1837 Rebellion
- Northwest Rebellion 1885
- Yukon Field Force 1896
- South African War 1899-1902
- First World War 1914-1918
- Second World War 1939-1945
- Korean War 1950-1953
- UN and NATO peacekeeping operations, including former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan conflicts

The original British Garrison was located on the current site of Victoria Park. In the 1880s the Garrison was moved to its current location and became the site of the first military architecture erected by the government of the Dominion of Canada. This building housed the new Infantry School Corps which subsequently became Wolseley Barracks and was home to the first infantry regiment established in Canada, The Royal Canadian Regiment. The size of the establishment at Wolseley Barracks has fluctuated over time with circumstances. Currently, there are no Regular Force Units stationed there and the footprint has decreased accordingly.

Wolseley Barracks is now headquarters of 31 Canadian Brigade Group (31CBG) which is an Army Reserve Formation of the 4th Canadian Division.

<http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/31-cbg/index.page>

31 CBG Units

- [1st Hussars \(London, Sarnia\)](#)
- [The Windsor Regiment \(RCAC\)](#)
- [11th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA \(Guelph, Hamilton\)](#)
- [31 Combat Engineer Regiment \(The Elgin's\) \(St. Thomas, Waterloo\)](#)
- [31 Signal Regiment \(Hamilton and London\)](#)
- [The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry \(Wentworth Regiment\) \(Hamilton, Burlington\)](#)
- [4th Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment \(London, Stratford\)](#)
- [The Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada \(Cambridge, Kitchener\)](#)
- [The Essex and Kent Scottish \(Windsor, Chatham\)](#)
- [The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada \(Princess Louise's\) \(Hamilton\)](#)
- [The Grey and Simcoe Foresters \(Owen Sound, Barrie\)](#)
- [31 Service Battalion \(Windsor, Hamilton, London\)](#)

The other significant military establishment calling London home is HMCS PREVOST. This Naval Reserve Unit was commissioned on 01 November 1941 in order to recruit sailors for service in World War II. PREVOST is located at the Forks of the Thames and is now also home to the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial. HMCS PREVOST has been an important partner in the Garden Party in recent years.

<http://www.hmcsprevost.com/>

An important distinction to be drawn currently is that the military units in London and region are now Reserve Units. Although supported by a few Regular Force members, the vast majority of unit members are now "citizen soldiers / sailors." They have regular civilian occupations and are part-time military. So the connection between these units and the civilian community might be considered to be even greater today as they are now much more among the civilian population as students, employees, and even employers.

A third partner in the Garden Party this year is the Garrison Community Council. The GCC is a citizen based initiative bringing together members of the community from business, government, education, service clubs, associations and other interested individuals to build a greater understanding of the Canadian Forces through engagement and participation with the local military community.

<http://www.gcclondon.ca/index.htm>

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| Save the date for this year's Garden Party: | Wednesday, 20 June 2018 |
| Time: | 4:00pm – 6:00pm |
| Where: | HMCS PREVOST, 19 Becher Street, London |

By Invitation Only – Formal Invitations to follow.

Col Chris Poole
Commander
31 Canadian Brigade Group



LCdr Jeremy Breese
Commanding Office
HMCS PREVOST



Doug McAndless
President
Garrison Community Council

