



GARRISON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

London and Region

Connecting

Spring 2021

Greetings,

Spring has sprung and our thoughts turn to the greening of the land and the approaching warmth of Summer.

COVID - 19 vaccinations are now available, and I expect that some of our members have already received at least one vaccination shot. Congratulations, but for the time being we must not lower our alert level.

If you missed our Annual General Meeting, reports were received, and the customary business of an AGM took place. You should have already received a copy of my Report, so I will not repeat it here. However, I will summarize a key point of my Report. In light of the presence of COVID - 19, your GCC Executive responded thoughtfully and creatively to a situation that could have had serious negative impact upon the GCC. By going to Zoom meetings, we have managed to maintain contact with most of our members. The support of the membership of the Zoom format has been appreciated.

At the AGM, the Executive for 2021 was elected. **The 2020 Executive will continue in 2021.** The members of your Executive remain as:

Pres. Tom Dean Past Pres. Geoff Hutton VP Mike Leatham Secretary Randy Harden
Treasurer John Martin

There is still room at the GCC Executive virtual table for two additional members of the GCC.

For your Executive, 2020 was challenging but also productive. We have developed a good appreciation of the talents and abilities of each other and are willing to have a good laugh together. Even during a pandemic, we need to laugh. **If you wish to discuss your possible involvement in the Executive, please forward an email to me with your phone number and I will be pleased to speak with you.**

During Covid, we are grateful and appreciative of the support that we have received from the 31 CBG and HMCS Prevost. We recognize the unique challenges that all our military units have faced and continue to face during the pandemic.

Past Pres. Geoff has managed to obtain a good variety of speakers, including our upcoming speaker on **Wed. April 14th at 12 noon on Zoom. Commander Norman Gautreau, the Commanding Officer of HMCS Ville De Quebec, will present about the RCN's recent forays into the Arctic area of operations (AOR) including OPERATION Nanook.** This is very topical and has some real implications regarding Canada's sovereignty in the north.

If you have never joined us on Zoom, please do so. It is easy to join the meeting and to see and hear the speaker, the photos, charts etc. You can also easily ask a question. Let us have a great turnout for our next meeting. If you have any questions about using Zoom, please let us know and we will try to help.

Work is proceeding well on our new website. We are nearing the completion of the Design Phase and the Construction Phase will soon commence. We will let you know when the site is up and running so you can personally look at it and refer your friends and associates to it.

Although we added four new members during the pandemic, we can use some more new members. Please remember that membership is everyone's responsibility. With more members our options regarding GCC outings and activities also increase.

We do not expect that GCC in-person meetings will resume for some time. Only when it is safe to do so and we have a suitable meeting room, will we have in-person meetings.

If, at any time, you have any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding your GCC, please feel free to contact me or any other member of the Executive.

May the access to vaccination shots, the longer days, the promises of Spring and appearance of the Boys of Summer back on the baseball diamonds, add bounce to your step and thankfulness in your heart.

Tom Dean

President



In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes.

When you pulled on the ropes, the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on.

Hence the phrase.. 'Goodnight, sleep tight'

TRAINING NAVAL RESERVISTS IN A PANDEMIC

By PO2 Emely Melendez, CD

A sailor attending virtual training during the COVID-19 provincial lockdown.



How do you maintain operational readiness at a naval reserve unit when you cannot gather or the Province of Ontario puts the province into a shutdown? With creativity and a lot of flexibility. Much like everything else the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us, training approximately 250 sailors while complying with all the public health measures has required the ability plan for limited in-person meetings while also maintaining the ability to convert those meetings to online events.

During the province-wide shut down, HMCS PREVOST was able to continue its ongoing operations readiness by conducting a series of Regenerative Training Requirement (RTR) sessions. These sessions focused on topics like supporting mental health, fighting sexual misconduct within the Navy, conducting search and rescue operations, protecting internal security by protecting ourselves against cyber-attacks, and discussing ethical behaviour. These discussions were well-received by all the sailors, all of whom appreciated being able to keep in touch with their shipmates while staying safe in unprecedented times.



S1

Mostowich dove in West Hawk Lake in Manitoba with the Western Region Dive Team for ice diving.

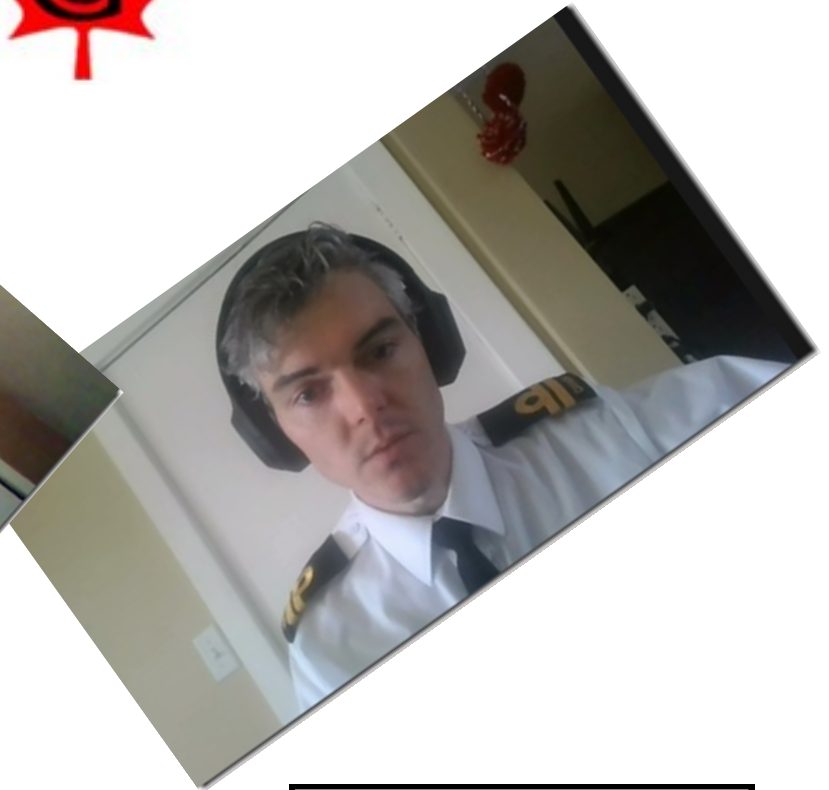
Lt(N) Michels works on improving shooting skills under the direction of PO2 Auld



Once the Provincial lockdown was lifted and limited gatherings were permitted, HMCS PREVOST's Ship's Company returned to some limited parading, by organizing into Port and Starboard watches. These watches would alternate coming into the unit every week and would conduct online training in the off weeks.

Outside of this, members of HMCS PREVOST's Ship's Company engaged in diver training in West Lake, MB and Toronto, ON in the final weeks of February 2021, as well as weapons readiness exercises at the Cedar Springs Range in Cedar Springs, ON. Though limited in the number of people that can attend in order to comply with public health measures, these events show that HMCS PREVOST is ready no matter what circumstances arrive.

GCC Zoom Meeting of Wednesday January 13, 2021 with Chief Neal Roberts of the Middlesex-London Paramedic Service



Screenshots by Gary Nash



NORAD Conducts Arctic Air Defence Exercise

From March 20 to 26, 2021, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) will be conducting an arctic air defence exercise. Exercise AMALGAM DART will see a variety of military aircraft from the Royal Canadian Air Force and United States Air Force operating out of northern locations including Whitehorse, Y.T., Yellowknife, N.W.T, Edmonton, Alta., Goose Bay, N.L, Iqaluit, Nun, and Thule, Greenland.

While exercise flights will be conducted over sparsely populated Arctic areas and at high altitudes, where the public is not likely to hear or see them, there will be increased flight activity at Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Edmonton, 5 Wing, Goose Bay, N.L., and Iqaluit, Nunavut. This exercise is in no way related to the Government of Canada or United States' response to COVID-19.

NORAD routinely conducts exercises using a variety of scenarios including airspace restriction violations, hijackings, and responses to unknown aircraft. NORAD carefully plans and closely controls all exercises. This air defence exercise provides us the opportunity to hone our skills as Canadian and U.S. forces operate together with our allies and partners in the Arctic.

During the exercise, a layered risk mitigation procedure will be employed which will limit contact with the local population to the greatest extent possible. Based on best practices recommended by Canadian health authorities and the Canadian Forces Surgeon General, participating military personnel will follow established mitigation protocols, (such as mask wearing, frequent cleaning of surfaces and other PPE use as appropriate).

Participating U.S. military personnel will require two negative COVID-19 test, separated by a minimum of 5 days, with the last test prior to arriving in Canada, and all exercise participants adhering to local, Territorial/Provincial, Federal and Canadian Armed Forces/Department of National Defence guidelines and regulations regarding public health measures for the duration of the AMALGAM DART.

For more than 60 years, NORAD has identified and intercepted potential air threats to North America through the execution of the command's aerospace warning and aerospace control missions. NORAD also keeps watch over Canadian and U.S. internal waterways and maritime approaches under its maritime warning mission.

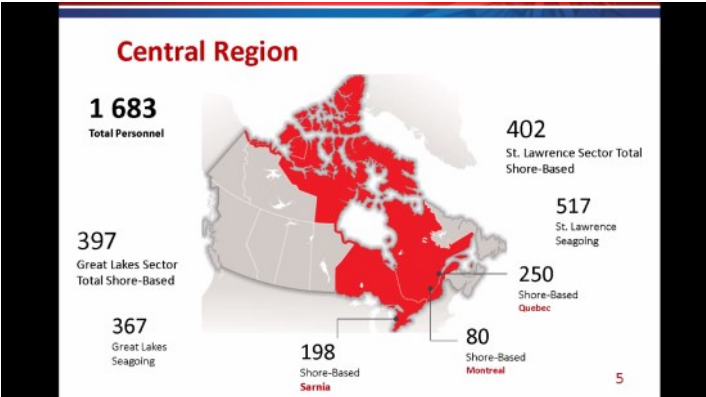


Website

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

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GCC Zoom Meeting of Wed. Feb. 10th with Jean-François Joly, *MBA* Regional Director of Incident Management (IM) Canadian Coast Guard Central Region and the GCC Annual General Meeting



CENTRAL REGION

The **Central Region** comprises the **Great Lakes** and **St. Lawrence** sectors and the **Arctic**.

CENTRAL REGION

Current Assets: Central Region

- 1 regional headquarters
- 11 operational bases
- 1 683 personnel
- 43 vessels
- 15 lifeboat stations
- 12 inshore rescue stations
- 2 air cushioned vehicles
- 7 helicopters
- 4 596 floating aids
- 1 836 fixed aids
- 4 MCTS Centres


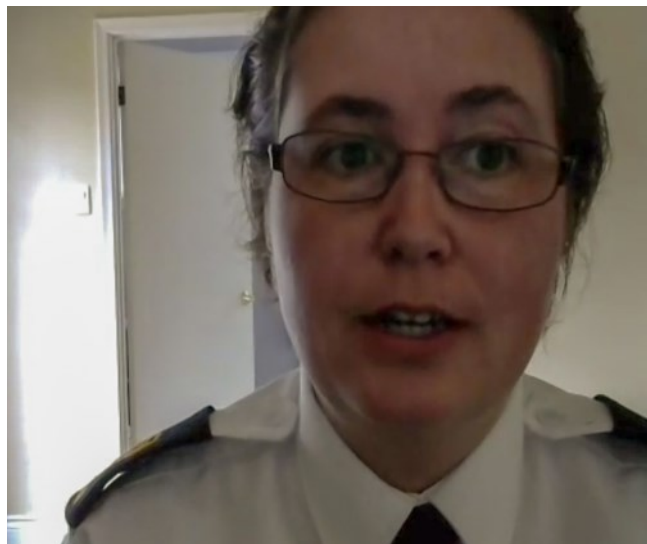
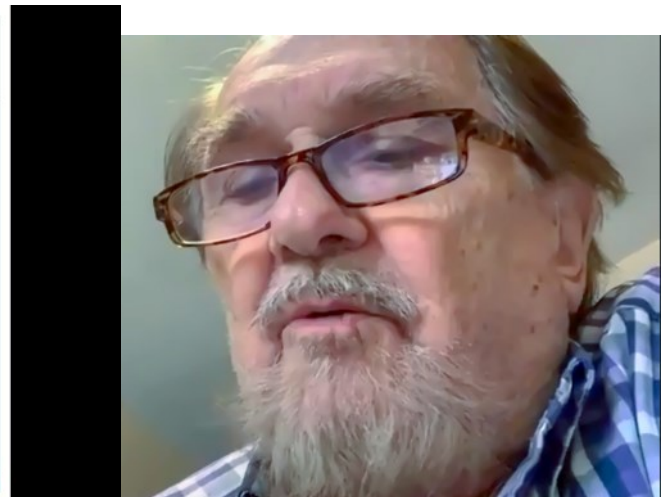


GCC Zoom Meeting on Wed. March 31st with Lt(N) Andrew J. McLaughlin, PhD Public Affairs Officer 31 Canadian Brigade Group Canadian Armed Forces



THREE MODELS

- Censorship (1917-1960)
- Confrontation (1960-2002)
- Co-operation (2003-Present)

STOLEN VALOUR AND THE CRIMINAL CODE OF CANADA

January 21, 2021

Michael Blais

I have been travelling to Ottawa on a regular basis since 2011, when the Canadian Veterans Advocacy was first invited to participate with Veterans Affairs Canada stakeholder group. I was soon appalled to note that reprehensible crimes of stolen valour were being perpetrated even as we assembled on the National War Memorial at the eleventh hour on the eleventh day, of the eleventh month.

At the poser level, -a poser being an individual who has never served yet poses as a soldier-, one incident was particularly remarkable. Readers will remember the case of an individual being interviewed prior to the National Remembrance Service wearing a CAF dress uniform and posing as a sergeant of The Royal Canadian Regiment. The individual brazenly added the Medal of Bravery to his other illegitimate medals, jump wings and pathfinders badge to complete his bogus ensemble. His false but impressive symbols of martial merit drew the attention of the national media. The consequences were immediate, starkly profound and by mid-afternoon, sharp eyed Royal Canadians had “outed” the individual as a fraud. As a result, I was invited to the CBC studio in Ottawa to do an interview on the subject of Stolen Valour for The National. Criminal charges were levied, and justice in this case was served.

There have also been instances of deplorable embellishment, wherein yes, the individual did serve yet felt compelled to dishonestly embellish their service by adding medals, parachute wings and other unearned honorifics to *their* uniforms. A prominent charity and several veterans organizations were adversely impacted by such acts of fraud, with reputations being besmirched (guilt by association) and relationships being irrevocably destroyed.

Stolen Valour Canada (SVC) emerged in 2014 as an independent, self funded, group of veterans willing to volunteer their time and military experience to provide an internet-based platform which investigates reports of alleged Stolen Valour across Canada. During the past 7 years, these veteran volunteers have exposed over three score of posers and embellishers who were exploiting national service & sacrifice in order to deceive Canadians across the nation. The accused have invariably been provided with options. An apology letter and the return of the medals is all that is required and many who have been exposed have availed themselves of this option, meekly surrendering their fraudulent “trinkets” along with a public apology in order to escape those punitive provisions set out under the Criminal Code of Canada (section 419). For years now, SVC has provided expert advice to affected law enforcement agencies with one precedent setting conviction in 2019 resulting in a steep monetary fine and probation. A number of other cases currently remain in the cue, with criminal proceedings proceeding.

So why do these individuals do it? Why do they pose as a soldier or, in my opinion even worse worse, a soldier who embellishes their military service by adding undeserved medals, parachute wings, commendations and other trinkets?

The SVC response line to this question is blunt: Most individuals reported to SVC were declared to be “grifters and con artists who lie, cheat and steal for their personal gain.” Some posers have used “their Special Status to attend military ceremonies, Remembrance Day services, parades or charity sponsored galas and high profile sporting events as VIP guests.” Others have participated in fully funded commemorative pilgrimages and expeditions abroad. Some have used “fake military narratives and tales of battlefield injuries to advance their employment opportunities and political aspirations.”

The list of motives to impersonate a soldier includes; Intimidation, theft, fraud (which includes examples of nefariously applying for veteran/military discounts), questionable charity schemes, embezzlement and dating schemes. war crimes as a Special Forces Chief Warrant Officer, while at a presentation to six hundred schoolchildren!

In one bizarre incident, the miscreant poser went so far as to claim that he had committed war crimes as a Special Forces Chief Warrant Officer, while at a presentation to six hundred schoolchildren!

Every time this occurs, of course, truly deserving veterans are increasingly doubted and our reputation as a unique community is blighted.

So, how does SVC oversight work?

First, most of the 'poser' reports of Stolen Valour SCV receives are levied by veterans. When instances of embellishment arise, the suspect is often identified by veterans who served in the individual's same regiments or units. Specific details are required, and if the allegations have merit, SVC conducts an investigation based "on open sources, public information, unit war diaries and timelines". Please note that SVC has a rigorous set of Standard Operating Procedures. Research information is peer reviewed, and should the "smoking gun" or an admission of guilt be absent, the names of the suspected posers/embellishers are not published. It is also noteworthy that SVC does not have access to MPRR and depends on protocols inherent with the Access to Information Act to confirm or deny service and medal-commendation-parachute wing aberrations.

Should you feel that there is a poser or embellisher preying on your community, reach out to SVC through this link.

www.stolenvalour.ca



Check out our website for online-exclusive content

espritdecorps.ca

We are *The one that's read!*

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Editor's Pick

I have recently finished reading four books which I purchased from the website of espritdecorps.

I have enjoyed each of the books but I was very impressed by "Shadow Wars" by David Pugliese. This book, in considerable detail, describes the operations of the Special Forces in Afghanistan including the U.S. Army Green Berets, Australia's Special Air Service and Canada's JTF2.

I learned a lot from this book and highly recommend it. Take a look at the book selections on the website of espritdecorps.

TD

Coming Soon to your GCC

**Wed. April 14th at 12 noon
on Zoom**

**Commander Norman
Gautreau, the Commanding
Officer of HMCS Ville De
Quebec, will present about
the RCN's recent forays into
the Arctic area of operations
(AOR) including OPERA-
TION Nanook.**



Photo: MCpl Manuela Berger, Canadian Armed Forces

**Wed. May 12th at 12 noon on
Zoom**

Morris Brause, Lieutenant-Colonel (Retired) will present on RespectCanada.org as the facilitator for SW Ontario. Its mission is to engage all Canadian citizens and businesses in promoting mutual respect for military, our veterans, and their families.



Thank you to all of our members who have paid their dues. If you have forgotten, please forward your cheque for \$100 to:

Garrison Community Council

P.O. Box 28065

Oakridge R.O.

London, Ontario N6H 5E1

London's Wolseley Barracks operating at a high tempo (again)

Lt (N) Andrew McLaughlin, Public Affairs Officer, 31 CBG

Wolseley Barracks in London was once again the proverbial hive of activity on the weekend of March 26-28, 2021, hosting three new serials of Basic Military Qualifications, a Basic Machine Gun course, and Exercise STALWART MERCURY (Ex SM 21).

31 Signal Regiment soldiers joined signallers from 4th Canadian Division (4 Cdn Div) and Joint Task Force Central throughout the weekend on Ex SM 21, deploying mobile communications assets to London, St. Thomas, Cedar Springs (near Chatham), Port Stanley, Hamilton, and Winona Range (Grimsby), where they worked as a team with other 4 Cdn Div units all across Ontario.

This important exercise was designed to simulate an emergency event requiring the Canadian Armed Forces to provide rapid assistance to provincial or municipal civil authorities, and tested multiple C2 (Command and Control) nodes at various locations, in order to confirm the Division's capacity to communicate, move and operate anywhere in the Province of Ontario, at any time. "Ex SM 21 was a great test of our signals capacity, and our capabilities in coordinating rapid responses to domestic emergencies," said Major Carrie Riddell, G6 (Communications), 31 Canadian Brigade Group (31 CBG) HQ.

Additionally, with Canadian Army Reserve soldiers gearing up for a busy Reserve Summer Training period, the historic site that houses 31 CBG Headquarters and multiple Regimental HQs was again transformed into a regional training hub. 31 CBG Battle School, in accordance with strict Force Health Protection Measures (FHPM) -- including limits placed on travel and congregation between regions -- has adapted to the new realities of the COVID-19 environment by keeping courses separated, between cities, in a de-centralized strategy.

Meticulous FHPMs include basic Public Health recommendations like wearing masks, physical distancing and sanitizing hands and spaces; but also include pre-training screening and "cohorting" courses in separated course "bubbles," in order to enhance the effectiveness of these countermeasures.

Overall, the high state of readiness that 31 CBG must maintain is the objective; and this new model of localized training, paired with the ever-present hard work and dedication of local Reservists, make this busy base a critical centre for Canadian Armed Forces preparedness and contingency planning.

"It's a great benefit to the Brigade, and to the Army in general, to have the facilities we have here at Wolseley Barracks, in such a central location; but more importantly, it's the people we have at the Battle School who make this high tempo of training possible," said Colonel Joe Robinson, Commander of 31 Canadian Brigade Group. *"Training hundreds of soldiers, from new recruits to NCOs and Officers is a team effort, and it's the dedicated staff and instructors that really make it happen."*



Photos: Bdr Julia Currie, 31 CBG Public Affairs



Members of 31 Signal Regiment deploy an inflatable satellite communications system during Exercise STALWART MERCURY 21 at Winona Range, near Hamilton on March 27, 2021.

Photos: 2Lt Peter Tanchak,
31 Signal Regiment



Colonel Joe Robinson, Commander of 31 Canadian Brigade Group receives a briefing from a member of 31 Signal Regiment during Exercise STALWART MERCURY at Wolseley Barracks in London, on March 27, 2021.



Photos: Major Carrie Riddell,
G6, 31 CBG HQ.

Now for Everyone's Favourite Thing - A QUIZ

(Based on info. in this Newsletter)

1. Name the members of your Executive (5)
2. HMCS Prevost conducted RTR sessions. What do these initials stand for?
3. What was the name of the recent NORAD arctic air defence exercise?
4. How many lifeboat stations are there in the Central Region of the Canadian Coast Guard?
5. What is SVC?
6. Name the editor's book pick.
7. Who is Norman Gautreau?
8. What was put into the air during Exercise Stalwart Mercury?

(Correct answers, without going back to look)

Category

7 to 8

General

5 to 6

Colonel

3 to 4

Captain

0 to 2

AWOL

To verify your answers - reread the Newsletter!

I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger.
Then it hit me.

A vulture boards an airplane, carrying two dead
raccoons.

The stewardess looks at him and says, "I'm sorry,
sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger."

