

Winter 2025

### From the desk of the President

I never anticipated being the President of the GCC during a war. Not in my wildest dreams, did I see Canada and the United States of America in an economic war of tariffs and more tariffs. This economic war was started by President Donald Trump without any provocation from Canada. However, the Canadian nation has come together to support a free, independent and sovereign Canada (Definitely not a state of the United States).

In 1974, the book “Ultimatum” was published. It was written by Richard Rohmer, a Canadian aviator, lawyer, adviser and author. He is also a retired Major General in the Canadian Army. His novels reflect the complexities and undercurrents of Canadian – American relations. A sequel to “Ultimatum” was “Exxoneration” which focuses on the oil industry’s power dynamics. The books also reveal how ill prepared Canada was to deal with the issues. I planned to reread the books but unfortunately, I could not find my copies.

In support of a free, democratic and sovereign Canada, the GCC is now starting its meetings with the patriotic singing of O Canada. Treasurer John Martin has a strong melodious voice to lead us, and he may be one of only a few members who can carry a tune!

On GCC local matters, I am pleased that VP Grant Hopcroft has graciously agreed to chair some of our meetings. Grant did a fine job at our March meeting. Grant and I will be alternating as the chair of the meetings until the summer recess when we will re-evaluate the situation. (I was getting weary from chairing GCC Meetings as I had done over the last five years.)

It is my sincere hope that this tariff war can be fairly and equitably resolved, as soon as possible, but I have my doubts.

I have a friend, who will remain nameless, is a retired economist. In an email to me he stated:

*Someone should also point out to him(Trump) and his cronies that the USA has done this before. And it did not end well. After a major policy screw up in 1929 crashed the stock market and triggered what would probably have been a mild recession, the USA passed the Smoot Hawley tariffs, in an effort to protect American jobs. Tariffs of 25-50% on imports. That crashed international trade (trade dropped by over 60% in the following year) And US unemployment went from 8% in 1930 to 25% in 1932. And they turned a mild recession into a major depression. Which lasted the rest of the decade. Incidentally, Canada was also hard hit as were most other countries. There is an argument that the severe depression in Germany is what caused Hitler’s rise to power in 1933.*

### GCC 2024 Bursary Recipients



S2 Vanessa L Waugh, HMCS Prevost



Lt Ruwan c. Wijesuriya 4 RCR



S1 Karolin Volodko, HMCS Prevost



A/S Lt Victor H. K. Lam, HMCS Prevost

## From the desk of the President *Continued from page 1*

With patriotism aflame in Canada, it may be a good time to invite friends, neighbours or associates to join us at a GCC meeting. Guests are always welcome to our meetings.

Tom Dean  
President GCC

## GCC 2024 Bursary Program Recipients



*Cmdr Michael Butler, S2 Vanessa L Waugh and Dr. Phil Dean*

The 2024-2025 bursary “season” has drawn to a close.

The standard of applications was particularly high this year, especially for those received from HMCS Prevost. A total of 6 applications were received: 2 from army reservists, 4 from Prevost reservists. Applications were evaluated by VP Bursaries Phil Dean and VP Special Projects Eric Thomson.

Because the standards of the applications were so high, it was decided to “Spread the Wealth”, and give out four \$1000 bursaries, but no Special Awards, this year. (Normally, Special Awards are awarded competitively among those who have already been awarded a \$1000 bursary.)

\$1000 bursaries were awarded to:

- Lt Ruwan Wijesuriya, 4 RCR
- A/SLt Victor Lam, HMCS Prevost
- S1 Karolin Volodko, HMCS Prevost
- S2 Vanessa Waugh, HMCS Prevost

*Continued on page 3*

## 2024 GCC Executive

President .....	Tom Dean
Past President .....	Geoff Hutton
Vice President .....	Mike Leatham
VP Communications ....	Kevin Patterson
VP Bursaries .....	Dr. Phil Dean
VP Special Projects ....	Eric Thomson
VP Programming .....	Grant Hopcroft
Secretary .....	Randy Harden
Treasurer .....	John Martin

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## Connections Editors

Kevin Patterson - VP Communications  
Tom Dean - President and Editorial Consultant  
GCC Screenshots - Gary Nash  
Event photos - Randy Harden, Geoff Hutton, Eric Thomson



GCC’s Mission to build a greater understanding, support and appreciation of Canada’s military.

Our three fundamental tenets are  
**Support, Assist and Connect.**



## GCC 2024 Bursary Program Recipients

*Continued from page 2*

Secretary Randy Harden and Phil Dean were able to present awards (cheques plus citations) in person to A/SLt Lam and S2 Waugh on Dec 4 (a snowy, but not overly snowy, evening) at a Prevost Awards Parade. (Eric Thomson had intended to attend also, but was ill.) S1 Volodko had an academic conflict. Her package was delivered by hand by RH on 11\_12\_2024.

Randy and Phil had intended to make a presentation to Lt Wijesuriya at a parade set for Dec 5 at Wolseley Barracks, but that parade was cancelled due to particularly bad weather. His package was hand-delivered by RH on 11\_12\_2024 also.

It is particularly noteworthy that this bursary-year was the last in terms of funding by Militex and GDLS; to bring the residual funds up to the level needed for four \$1000 bursaries, GCC funds had to be used.



*Cmdr Michael Butler, Lt Victor H. K. Lam and Dr. Phil Dean*

## Every Member should be a GCCPP

(Garrison Community Council Project Person)

**Who Can Participate in the GCC?  
All Of Us!**

The Garrison Community Council is open to any individual, or organization representative wishing to participate in any activity to raise awareness of and support for the local military community - past and present.

## Captain (Navy) Sean Batte and Rebecca Haydon-Batte awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal

His Majesty's Canadian Ship Prevost welcomed Peter Fragiskatos Member of Parliament for London North Centre to our Wardroom to present Captain (Navy) Sean Batte and Rebecca Haydon-Batte both with the King Charles III Coronation Medal. Both Captain (Navy) Batte and Rebecca Haydon-Batte are being recognized for their local and national support of the Royal Canadian Navy and supporting the preservation of history of the Royal Canadian Navy.

Bravo Zulu to you both!



*Peter Fragiskatos MP and Captain (Navy) Sean Batte*



*Rebecca Haydon-Batte and Peter Fragiskatos MP*



## Photos from The Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025

In this issue we have the privilege of including these amazing images from the Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025, which took place from February 8-16, 2025. The games brought together up to 550 competitors from up to 25 nations. Many thanks to Stephen J. Thorne from Legion Magazine for providing us with these images.



Hyeongyoon Na of South Korea, who lost both forearms to an electric fence at the North Korean border, competes in the 50m backstroke ISC.

*Photo by: Stephen J. Thorne/Legion Magazine*



Kim Hardy of Canada takes possession of the ball in wheelchair rugby action versus Jean-Sebastian Bergeron, a Canadian competing for Team Unconquered 2, one of several Unconquered teams made of athletes from various countries.

*Photo by: Stephen J. Thorne/Legion Magazine*



Lee Jarratt of Canada took silver in the Women's Novice IAS1-Sit Ski at Whistler.

*Photo by: Stephen J. Thorne/Legion Magazine*

*Continued on Page 5*



## Photos from The Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025 *Continued from Page 4*



Harry congratulates Oleksii Horb of Ukraine after his silver medal finish in the Men's Novice IAS1-Sit Ski at Whistler. The Ukrainians finished 1-2 in the event, won by Serhii Hordiievych.

*Photo by: Stephen J. Thorne/Legion Magazine*

## GCC March General Meeting



### Military History Research Centre

Paul Durand  
Supervisor, Military History Research Centre  
Canadian War Museum  
March 5, 2025



Canada



Our speaker for March was **Paul Durand Supervisor** of the **Military History Research Centre (MHRC)** at the **Canadian War Museum** in Ottawa. His topic was,

**“Hidden Gem - The Military History Research Centre, Canadian War Museum”**

Paul has worked in a library, archive and museum setting for 16 years, and at the Canadian War Museum since 2019.

### Canadian War Museum - Mandate

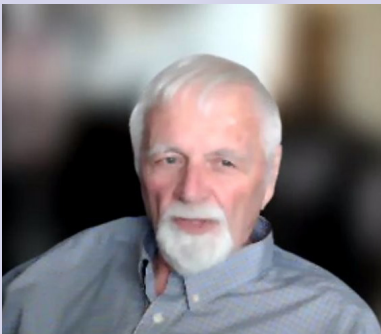
*The Museum's exhibition galleries and public programs have been designed to **emphasize the human experience of war.** ...present the military history of Canada from earliest times to present day, as well as Canada's history of honouring and remembrance.*



*Continued on Page 6*

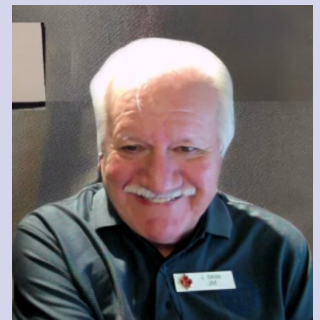
## GCC March General Meeting *Continued from Page 5*

The Military History Research Centre (MHRC) provides access to the museum's library and archival holdings and assists researchers of all kinds with their research. Whether it be a member of the public researching family military service or a professional researcher taking a deep dive into a topic, the MHRC helps researchers find the information they are looking for. This presentation will look at the MHRC's collections and research services, and will touch on some of the more common research topics.



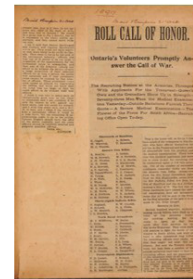
### Canadian War Museum

- Crown Corporation
- National mandate
- Physical and digital presence
- Research, education, programming and tourism



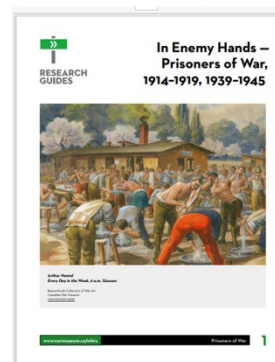
### CWM Collections

- **National Collection**
  - (Study, Corporate, Living History)
  - **Artifacts and Archives**
    - Art, Dress, Medals, Arms/Tech,
    - Textual, Image, Oral History
- **Library**
  - Regular, Pamphlet, Technical and Rare
- **Corporate Records**



### Military History Research Centre

- Collections access
- Collections catalogues ([Library](#) and [Artifact/Archive](#))
- Research assistance
- Research space
- Reference services
- Research resources ([guides](#), [finding aids](#), etc...)





## GCC March General Meeting

Continued from Page 6

### MHRC - Research

- *Who?*
  - **Internal**
  - *Professional (media, company, writers, film makers, etc...)*
  - *Academic (Masters and PhD)*
  - *Personal / Family*
  - *Other (law enforcement, government, organizations, gaming, fashion, restoration, model makers, etc...)*



### MHRC - Sample Reference

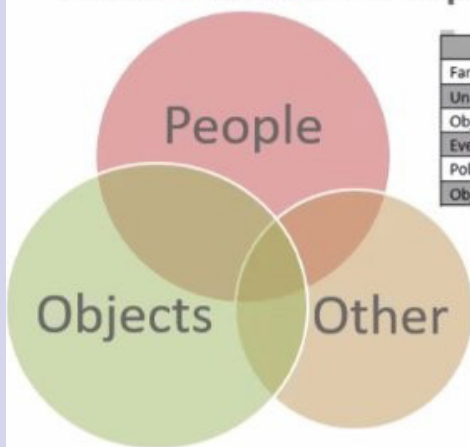
- *What uniform is my grandparent wearing in this photo?*
- *What does A.A. Section 15(1) mean on a Service File?*
- *What was the size of a North Atlantic Convoy?*
- *What type of radio was used in [vehicle] [year]?*
- *What type of bayonet is this?*
- *Where did the grandfather's in Camp Petawawa work?*
- *What is the value of my antique [object]?*  
(\*We don't give values)
- *I know nothing about my grandfather's service, where do I start?*



Researching military history can be complicated. Here you'll find answers to the most common research questions and questions about the MHRC, research guides, and search tools. There is also a contact form if you would like to connect with our staff.

### Military History FAQs

### MHRC – Reference Topics



Categories	Stats
Family/Person	8
Unit	5
Object-Personal	33
Event	6
Policy	1
Object-Collections	18

### Contact Us

#### FAQ

[Have a research question? | Canadian War Museum](#)

#### Contact

[www.warmuseum.ca/mhrc](http://www.warmuseum.ca/mhrc)  
[mhrc-crhm@warmuseum.ca](mailto:mhrc-crhm@warmuseum.ca)



### The GCC is pleased to welcome Jim Dean as a member of the GCC.

Jim Dean is located in Ottawa where he is the creative director for the Haunted Walk in Ottawa, Kingston and Toronto. He is the host of the podcast, Haunted Talks. Jim is married to Michelle and they have a special cat - Arthur. Jim has attended several of the GCC Zoom meetings as a guest and has enjoyed the speakers and the Newsletter, "Connections"

Welcome aboard Jim.

## Prime Minister Carney strengthens Canada's security and Arctic sovereignty



Prime Minister Carney was in Iqaluit, Nunavut, to announce initiatives in partnership with Inuit leaders to build the Nunavut economy and strengthen Canadian security and sovereignty in the Arctic.

Now more than ever, we need to reaffirm Canadian sovereignty by strengthening our military, bolstering our Arctic security, and unleashing the North's economic potential.

First, Prime Minister Carney announced that Canada intends to partner with Australia to develop advanced Over-the-Horizon Radar technology. This partnership will include developing Canada's Arctic Over-the-Horizon Radar system, an investment of more than \$6 billion that will provide early warning radar coverage from threats to the Arctic. A key component of Canada's NORAD modernization plan, the radar system's long-range surveillance and threat tracking capabilities will detect and deter threats across the North. Collaboration with Australia on this critical technology will further deepen our long-standing bilateral defence relationship, while supporting Canada's commitment to strengthening North American defences in partnership with the United States.

The Prime Minister confirmed the partnership in his call with the Prime Minister of Australia, Anthony Albanese.

Second, Prime Minister Carney announced that Canada will take on a greater, sustained, and year-round Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) presence in the Arctic – an investment of nearly \$420 million to protect our sovereignty across land, air, and sea. With an expansion of its Northern and Arctic operations and training exercises, and the deployment of more personnel, the CAF will be better placed to defend Canada's Arctic presence and sovereignty – while enabling greater collaboration with NATO Allies.

Third, to advance reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, Prime Minister Carney announced over \$253 million in new support to build a stronger economy across Nunavut, including:

- **\$94 million** to upgrade power plants in Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Igloolik, and Iqaluit. These important energy upgrades will ensure that Nunavut communities have access to safe and dependable power.
- **Almost \$74 million** to improve critical housing infrastructure, accelerate housing development, and help meet the growing demand for affordable housing.
- **Almost \$66 million** to build, renovate, and repair hundreds more homes across Nunavut, including for Indigenous Peoples and underserved groups.
- **\$20 million** to help the Nunavut Nukkiqsautiit Corporation complete the first phase of the development of its hydroelectricity facility which will, once complete, provide renewable energy security and create jobs across Nunavut.

Following a positive and constructive meeting with the Premier of Nunavut, P.J. Akeegok, the two leaders agreed to continue to work together in partnership on shared priorities in the Arctic.

The Prime Minister also met with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated as well as the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Natan Obed, to reinforce the fundamental importance of their leadership and to establish a link of collaboration on major infrastructure projects.

With an enhanced Arctic focus, the Canadian government is improving our military readiness, creating more high-paying jobs, and growing a stronger economy across the North. Working closely with Indigenous Peoples and our Allies, we will fortify the Arctic by strengthening our year-round presence, accelerating defence spending, unleashing the North's economic potential, and reasserting Canada's sovereignty and security.

*"Canada is, and forever will be, an Arctic nation, and we can never take our sovereignty and security in the region for granted. Our government will strengthen Canada's Arctic security, bolster partnerships with our closest Allies, unleash the North's economic potential, and reaffirm reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Canada will remain a strong, secure, and sovereign nation."*

– The Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada



## ITPS announces Giorgio Clementi as Executive Chairman and Dave Lohse becomes CEO



The International Test Pilots School (ITPS Canada) is pleased to announce an exciting leadership transition that marks the beginning of a new chapter in the organization's continued commitment to excellence in flight test training and education.

After decades of dedicated service as President and CEO of ITPS Canada, Giorgio Clementi will transition into the role of Executive Chairman and Head of Engineering effective January 24. As Chairman, Mr. Clementi will focus on guiding the long-term vision and governance of ITPS Canada while continuing to support the school's mission of being a global leader in flight test education.

Stepping into the role of Chief Executive Officer is Dave Lohse, formerly Vice President of Flight Test at ITPS Canada. Mr. Lohse brings a wealth of experience on both the flight test and tactical training sides of the business with strategic insight, and a passion for innovation. Lohse's unique experience positions him well to lead ITPS into its next era of growth, building on the strong foundation established under Mr. Clementi's leadership.

"Together, Giorgio, Beverley and their family have built a truly incredible flight test and tactical training school that is world renowned for the expertise and professionalism of their entire team. Giorgio has been recognized globally with many professional accolades that are a testament to his unwavering commitment and dedication to innovation and excellence.

I feel truly honoured and privileged for the trust that you have all personally placed in me, and for the opportunity to serve as only the third CEO of ITPS in its almost 40-year history in the UK and Canada. I do not take the trust and responsibility placed upon

me lightly and I will work tirelessly every day to build upon the legacy Giorgio has created", said Lohse.

Under Giorgio Clementi's guidance, ITPS Canada has grown to become a trusted partner to governments, industry, and organizations worldwide, training some of the world's finest test pilots, fighter pilots and flight test engineers. Lohse's appointment ensures that the organization remains at the forefront of innovation, delivering cutting-edge training and advancing the aerospace sector's future.

"After almost 30 years of leading International Test Pilots School, it is both a happy and proud moment to announce my transition from CEO to Executive Chairman. ITPS has been the journey of a lifetime for me and my family. Together, we've built a globally respected flight test institution, ITPS —one of only eight recognized test pilot schools in the world and the only one in Canada, as well as a growing center of excellence for fighter pilot training, the International Tactical Training Center. I am grateful for the many wonderful experiences and the excellent flying opportunities", said Clementi. "As I step into a new role, I am filled with confidence about the future of ITPS under the leadership of our new CEO. Dave Lohse brings not only a wealth of experience and dedication but a deep respect for the values and culture that make ITPS unique. His passion for excellence and his vision for the future align seamlessly with the legacy we have built, and I have no doubt he will lead ITPS to even greater heights", he continued.

ITPS Canada extends its gratitude to its students, alumni, partners, and supporters for their unwavering trust and dedication. Together, the organization is poised to achieve new milestones and redefine what is possible in flight test and tactical training.



## GCC February Annual General Meeting



The speaker for our AGM was fellow GCC member **Harry Huffman, P. Eng., (Retired)**. Harry is an agricultural engineer registered with **Professional Engineers Ontario**. He graduated from the University of Guelph in 1971 and worked as an extension engineer for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food specializing in livestock ventilation and heating until the fall of 2000. Harry then operated his own engineering practice in London, Ontario offering agricultural engineering expertise to the livestock and poultry industry until fully retiring in the spring of 2022.

Prior to the AGM, Harry provided a short presentation, titled "The Poppy Trail, Historic Battlefield Tour Overview".



London, England  
City Tour

By Double-Decker Bus



Thames River Cruise

(view of Windsor Castle from the Thames and traditional English Tea while on board)

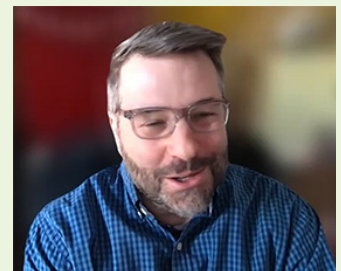
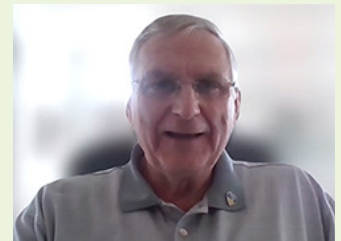


Portsmouth  
D-Day  
Museum  
and Historic  
Dockyard



HMS Victory  
Battleship  
Tour

(The Royal  
Navy's most  
famous  
warship)



Continued on Page 11



## GCC February Annual General Meeting *Continued on Page 10*



Sailed from Portsmouth Harbour across the English Channel to Caen, Normandy



Museums were extremely informative and amazingly presented



British Airborne landed via gliders by moonlight to be silent and captured Pegasus Bridge & Café Gondree (first liberated house on D-Day of WWII.)



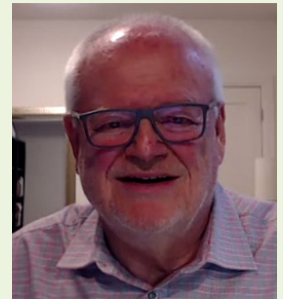
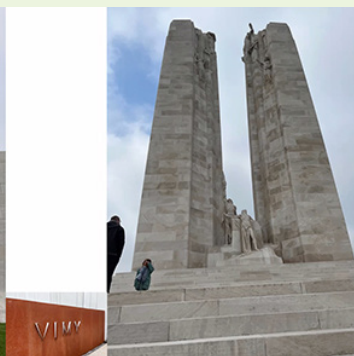
Trenches, tunnels and no-man's land at Vimy



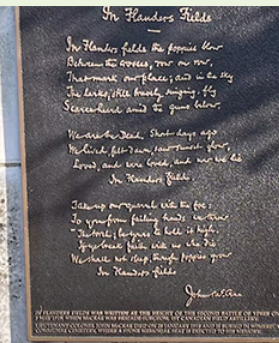
Visited a number of beach landings including Juno Beach, Omaha, Mulberry Harbour, Dieppe, Blue, Green, Red & White Beaches



German Defensive Batteries Constructed along the over 600 km coastline



Visited a number of cemeteries and memorials



Essex Farm





## GCC February Annual General Meeting



**Commonwealth Cemetery**  
At Tyne Cot  
(near Passchendaele)



## Honouring Our Veterans

### Major (Ret'd) Lynn Doucette



During her 35-year career in the Royal Canadian Air Force, Lynn Doucette was a woman of many firsts. She excelled in her role as an Air Weapons Controller, and while serving in the Persian Gulf, she was a Mission Crew Commander onboard AWACS aircraft, monitoring the enemy below and in the air.

Growing up in Ingonish Beach, Nova Scotia, Lynn Doucette always knew she wanted to join the RCMP. When the time finally came, she was devastated to learn that a height requirement would keep her from realizing her dream. Undeterred, she set her sights on the military. Inspired by her brother in the Navy, she thought “maybe the Air Force might be okay” and ultimately found her lifelong career.

Lynn enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in July 1979 and completed her basic training at CFB Cornwallis. Being older than most of her fellow trainees, her seniority and drive helped her graduate as the top female recruit in her class, earning Lynn the coveted Commandant's Shield in the process. Her superiors quickly recognized her talent and focus and selected her for Officer training.

“I feel that the ethics and code of discipline instilled by my parents, and just being a good Cape Bretoner, led to my successes. You're hard working and you're there to do a job the best that you can.” After completing Officer training, Lynn went to North Bay, Ontario, where she trained as an Air Weapons Controller.

In that role, Lynn's main responsibility was to guide fighter pilots during their missions. By 1987, after just eight years of service, Lynn rose to the rank of Major.

Throughout her career, Lynn completed many international assignments, such as Montana and Alaska, and when Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait in 1990, Lynn had just arrived in Oklahoma for her next assignment – training on the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS). AWACS aircraft provide Command & Control using a powerful radar that assists with airborne surveillance, communications and battle management. All of this was instrumental to ensuring air dominance during the Persian Gulf War.



*American Air Force base in Incirlik, Turkey.*

Lynn was deployed to the region in April 1991. She was posted to an American Air base in Incirlik, Turkey where she became the first female Canadian Mission Crew Commander on a US AWACS aircraft.

*Continued on Page 13*



## Honouring Our Veterans

### Major (Ret'd) Lynn Doucette

*Continued from Page 12*

While up in the air, she coordinated with Generals on the ground, gave them a layout of the current radar picture, provided recommendations about the mission and provided courses of action. "Our aircraft could hold up to 40 crew members so you had to consider their safety as well as completing your mission for the Commander on the ground."

Despite having this important responsibility, Lynn still faced barriers as a woman. At the airbase in Turkey, local cultural restrictions banned women from entering the operations centres, which meant Lynn could not attend the intelligence debriefings once the plane landed. Her male deputy attended on her behalf.

*"Our aircraft could hold up to 40 crew members so you had to consider their safety as well as completing your mission for the Commander on the ground."*



Canadian crew in front of AWACS plane.

One particularly tense moment stands out from Lynn's time in the Persian Gulf. With no real defenses, AWACS aircraft are usually protected by fighter jets. On this occasion, with the fighter jets far ahead at the Kuwaiti border, the radar suddenly detected high speed aircraft from a neighboring country coming towards them. "We were considered a high value asset so to shoot us down would have been a huge win for them. As per procedures, we performed a 'bug out' by executing a rapid descent, a 180 degree turn and quickly exiting the area. It definitely raised the heart rate of all the crew members."

After the war, Lynn participated in other AWACS missions including drug running patrols down in the Gulf of Mexico and intercepting Russian Bear aircraft in Alaska and Iceland. She then went on to become the first female Canadian Armed Forces Arms Control Inspectors where she helped former Warsaw Pact countries join NATO. While visiting these countries, Lynn became popular with citizens, who were not used to seeing a woman in uniform.

Lynn retired from the Royal Canadian Air Force in 2014. After 35 years in the military, she struggled during her transition to life after service but she had the support she needed: "VAC picked up the ball and helped me from day one." Lynn now volunteers in her community of Chilliwack, B.C., with the Emergency Management team and the Royal Canadian Legion. She also conducts training sessions with the local fire department at her condominium complex.

With courage, integrity and loyalty, Lynn Doucette has left her mark. She is one of our Canadian Veterans.

Accessed through Salute magazine:

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/people-and-stories/they-proudly-served/lynn-doucette>

## ON TARGET: Why Doesn't the RCAF Fight Forest Fires?



By Scott Taylor

For the past couple of weeks, the world has watched while Los Angeles has burned.

Almost inconceivably, wildfires have eviscerated one of the largest urban areas in the United States. Despite some far right American commentators trying to put the blame on the 'DEI' hiring policies of the L.A. Fire Department, the fact is that the real culprit behind this mammoth blaze is the combined drought and high winds whipped up by Mother Nature.

Those firefighters battling the flames under these conditions are to be commended.

*Continued on Page 14*

## ON TARGET: Why Doesn't the RCAF Fight Forest Fires?

*Continued from Page 13*

In fact one of the sources of pride felt by Canadians is that we have been able to lend our southern neighbours a helping hand in the form of water-bombers to battle the blaze. Even with incoming President Donald Trump threatening to use economic force to make Canada the 51st State of America, the L.A. inferno has demonstrated the good neighbourly vibes that exist between our two countries.

However, it needs to be pointed out that while Canada and Canadians are proud that our nation is helping the US fight this fire, the truth is that those firefighting assets and personnel are being provided by provincial governments like BC and Quebec. The reason for this is that Canada has no federal agency tasked or equipped to fight forest fires.

Inexplicably, in a country that possesses 362 million hectares of forest - the third largest in the world -our Air Force is not equipped for nor tasked with fighting fires.

Ironically, one of the shining stars to emerge from this battle against the L.A. flames is the iconic CL-415 aircraft which is Canadian designed and built. Originally built by Canadair, the CL-415 was nicknamed the 'Super Scooper' when it first flew in 1993.

A twin-engine propeller plane, the CL-415 was custom designed to allow it to refill with water from lakes near the targeted forest fire, by skimming the surface. This allows the CL-415 far more time on station near the blaze rather than having to return to an actual airfield.

Following Canadair, Bombardier subsequently built the '415' and then, in turn, it was De Havilland Canada that produced these water bombers.

In October 2016 the CL-415 programme was acquired by the Victoria, BC based Viking Air. Their aim was to modernize the existing design into what has been renamed the DHC-515 Firefighter, which is currently being produced at a plant in Calgary.

A quick glimpse at the Viking Air order book reveals that international users of this 'DHC-515 Firefighter' are almost all foreign air forces; Croatia, Greece, Indonesia, Morocco, Portugal and Spain just to name a few.

Which begs the question, why is the RCAF not responsible for fighting forest fires?

Now those familiar with the RCAF's current crippling shortfall in trained pilots and aircrew will groan loudly at the suggestion of adding to the already unsustainable operational workload. The Colonel Blimp traditionalists will wince at the suggestion of the RCAF being employed in a non-combat role.

However, I think you could easily find civilian pilots to volunteer for an RCAF Air Reserve Squadron whose primary function would be fighting forest fires to save our natural resources and infrastructure. This Fire-fighting Squadron could be truly 'reserve' in nature with those willing to volunteer in time of need based across the entire country.

This would be similar to the Disaster Assistance Relief Team (DART) which is not a formed unit but rather a list of serving CAF members at bases all across Canada who are assembled at CFB Trenton prior to deployment.

The trade specialties and number of DART personnel are unique to each deployment and based on the specific nature of the disaster assistance they are to provide.

I'm sure recently many released RCAF aircrew would answer the call as the missions are challenging and rewarding in that the results are tangible in that you actually save lives and property.

Dropping loads of water on forest fires may not be as exciting as the prospect of engaging 'Fantasian' mock enemy fighter jets in a dog fight, but it would still be a hell of a lot more exciting than flying a cargo plane for a courier service. It would also be great public relations for the Canadian military to have water-bombers bedecked in RCAF markings battling fires to save forests and urban communities.

Just look at the reflected glory Canada is currently receiving from the residents of L.A. despite the fact that the big yellow water bombers helping them have the Quebec logo on their fuselages. They really should be a truly federal asset.



**espritdecors**  
CANADIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



## Honouring Canadian service in the Americas

Every year, Canadians are invited to send Valentine's Day cards to Veterans. This gesture is one of the many small ways we can recognize and thank them for their service—and the sacrifices they made for our nation.



*Panels showing Canadian Armed Forces efforts around the world.*

Earlier this month, we took part in Winterlude, the annual winter festival in Ottawa and Gatineau, with a visual display featuring the history of the CAF around the world. This included many of the different missions and operations in the Americas, featuring the Veterans who served on them.

From prairie floods to East Coast storms and ocean rescues. From the Halifax explosion to earthquakes in Haiti. From Canada's North to NORAD and Nicaragua. Veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members have kept us safe, sovereign and strong.

While CAF members have taken part in many missions around the world, this year, we are proud to highlight the service of Canadians on missions in the Americas and at home. A similar display was also present at the Festival du Voyageur in Winnipeg, Manitoba, from 14–23 February.

As part of our Commemoration Strategic Plan, Veterans Affairs Canada is focused on ensuring Canadians understand the service of all Veterans, regardless of where or when they served

Accessed through Salute magazine:

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/news-and-media/salute/february-2025>

## From dream job to nightmare of Russian invasion

Olena was at her dream job, a personal trainer at a successful gym, when she heard news of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



*CAPTION: An Australian Army soldier serving on Operation Kudu instructs Armed Forces of Ukraine personnel on section attack tactics. Story and photos by Corporal Michael Rogers.*

She had been part of the Volunteer Army since the Maidan Revolution in 2014, but felt something was different this time. She knew she had to do more.

“When the full-scale invasion started, the thing I realised was I am fully capable to do something more than just volunteering,” she said.

“There are people with limited capabilities who will take care of volunteering. I, myself, can do much more.”

Olena and her sister went together to sign up for full-time service, and she is one of more than 2000 Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) soldiers trained by Australians under Operation Kudu.

As one of 13 nations working together under the British-led Operation Interflex, Australian forces provide leadership training at section and platoon level, and urban, trench and woodland warfare.

*Continued on Page 16*

## From dream job to nightmare of Russian invasion



*CAPTION: A member of the Armed Forces of Ukraine participates in section attack training with Australian Army personnel in the United Kingdom.*

Another trainee on the section commander course, Serhii, was living an extremely different life before the war, working as a banker at one of Ukraine's major banks.

He found the Australians shared a similar mindset to the AFU and valued the instruction he received.

Learning how to deliver a structured set of orders was important, as they were often rushed due to being pressed for time on the ground in Ukraine.

"But you might find it surprising, the thing I find different is the general atmosphere of the training. It's peaceful and safe, not like back home," he said.

The relationship between the Australian trainers and AFU trainees, while initially reserved, grew during the course as they built mutual respect.

Another trainee section commander, Arthur, said the Australian instruction went beyond his expectations.

"Despite this course being about leadership knowledge – how to be a leader to NATO standards – Australians have given us much more," he said.

"They teach us many interesting things: how to be in urban environments, how to be in trenches, and many tips I have noted in my notebook, and will use it in the war."

A sculptor before the full-scale invasion, Arthur believed the AFU had just as much to teach the Australians as they had to learn.



*CAPTION: A member of the Armed Forces of Ukraine participates in section attack training with Australian Army personnel in the United Kingdom.*

"We know many nuances about war, that we have gotten from our experience, not from some standards but from real life," he said

"I can teach how to dig trenches to avoid first-person-view drone attack or drop explosives from drones; I can give tips on many different things."

Arthur still practises his art whenever he can, and plans to create sculptures depicting his experience in the war after it's over.

Serhii also has big plans for after the war. Hearing so much about his instructors' homeland has inspired him to travel to Australia.

"I want to go to Australia, because the instructors have told me I am welcome there any time. I want to go there with my daughter and see this great country," he said.

Though the war has been going for more than 1000 days, Olena said knowing their families were behind them kept the AFU's fighting spirit going.

"The first days of the war were hard; we fought through them. It's not much easier now, but we know how hard it could be, and we are still sure we can fight. We cannot surrender now," she said.

"I want to come back to my beloved job. I want to come back to my family, my son, my near and dear."

Accessed through Contact Newsletter #272:

<https://www.contactairlandandsea.com/2025/03/05/from-dream-job-to-nightmare-of-russian-invasion/>



## GCC January General Meeting



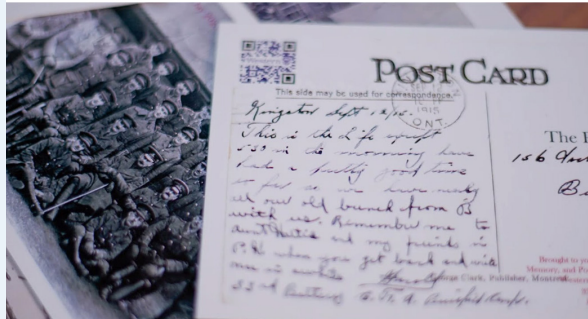
Our speaker in GCC's January Meeting was **Jonathan F. Vance professor of History at Western University**. He is co-director of the educational website [www.wartimecanada.ca](http://www.wartimecanada.ca), and the author of more than a dozen books, including *A Township at War* (2018), the chronicle of one Ontario community during the First World War., and *The True Story of 'The Great Escape'*.

### Topic - You've Got Mail: Rediscovering the Postcards of the First World War

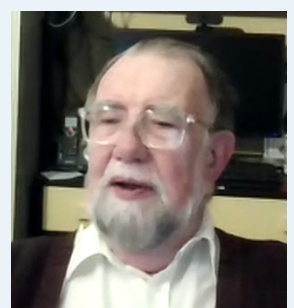
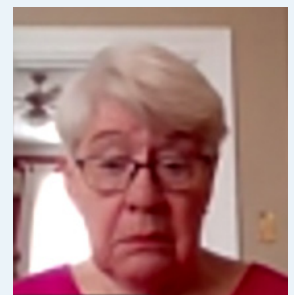
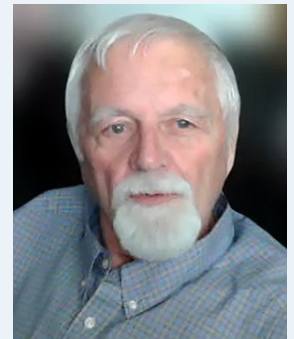
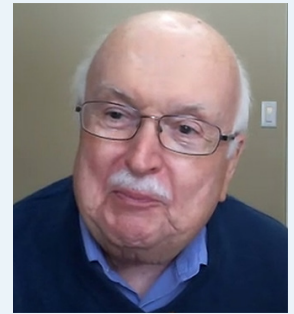
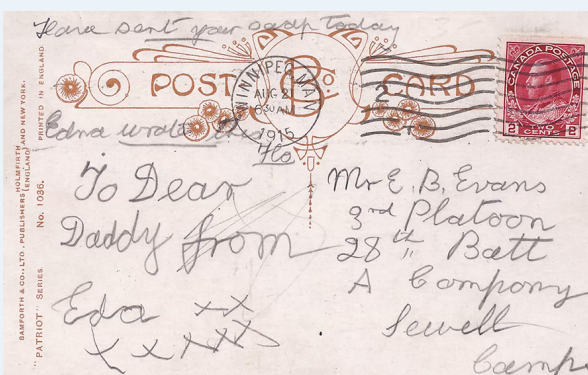
For soldiers and their families, the mail was a lifeline that allowed them to keep in touch and to imagine a time when things would return to normal. Over a century later, we can use the postcards they sent to make a connection with the past and the world they inhabited.



## You've Got Mail: Rediscovering the Postcards of the First World War



## Remembrance Day 2023

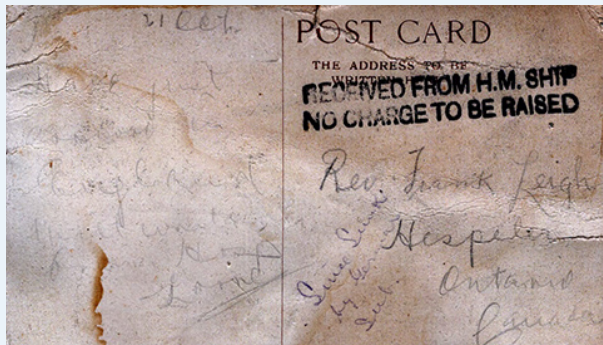
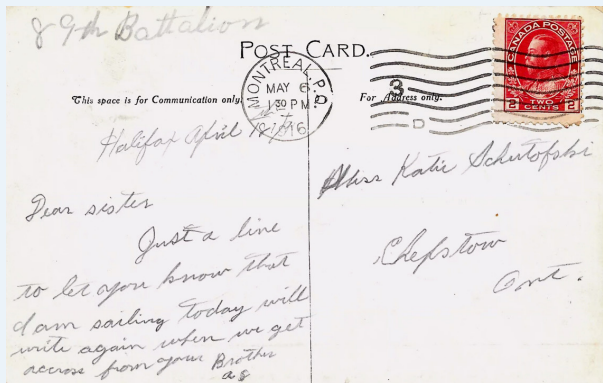


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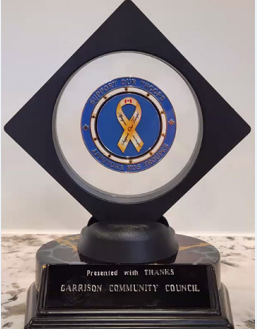


## GCC January General Meeting

Continued from Page 17



My sister Helen and my friend... CARD the pilot boat came out to meet and... the great old boat and the greatest old... I have never seen the remains of people across up on the top of hills, and a whole lot of... of the many wonders of nature... I have never seen the remains of people across up on the top of hills, and a whole lot of... of the many wonders of nature... I have never seen the remains of people across up on the top of hills, and a whole lot of... of the many wonders of nature...



When Allen Morgan enlisted for military service in 1916, he was living in your house - and he returned there in 1919, after the end of the First World War.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2023, take a moment to remember Allen, and all those who served Canada in time of war.

The Resident  
132 Stanley Ave  
Hamilton, ON  
L8P 2L4

Brought to you by the Ley and Lois Smith War, Memory, and Popular Culture Research Collection, Western University, London, Ontario, and [www.warimc.ca](http://www.warimc.ca). Contact us at [warimc@uwu.ca](mailto:warimc@uwu.ca) or use the QR code.



### Activity: Writing Home

Once students have completed the questions from the worksheet, have them return to their desks for an independent activity.

Each student will adopt the persona of a Canadian soldier at the front during the First World War. They will then create their own postcard to be sent home to their family or friends.

- Think about what a soldier would want to tell family and friends BUT keep in mind the limitations of wartime censorship, which meant that their soldiers had to use caution in their writing.
- Students can think about how they communicate with their own family. Would they be a parent the same things they would tell a soldier? Would they tell a parent everything they were doing, or give them an edited version of events? What would they edit out and why?

- Create a photo or image for the front side of the postcard (i.e. landscape, portrait, group photo, war cartoon, etc).
- Then, write a personalized message to family or friends. Make sure to clearly indicate who you are writing to and why?
- Remember - this is the actual size of a First World War postcard, so you only have a certain amount of space!



#401285 Clifford Atchison





## Honouring Our Veterans

### Major Retired S.V.A. Blizzard CD inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame (CMHF)



*Dr Blizzard poses for a quick photograph before entering his aircraft.*

*July 17, 2023 – Defence Stories*

On June 22, 2023, Major (Retired) Stephen Blizzard CD was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame (CMHF) during the annual Laureate Induction Ceremony in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Doctor Blizzard's alma mater, the University of Western Ontario (Schulich School of Medicine) nominated him with support from Canadian Forces Health Services.

A first-generation Black Canadian, Dr. Blizzard overcame systemic racism to become a pilot, physician, and decorated peacekeeper. He is forever remembered as a courageous trailblazer who demonstrated leadership in adversity and a commitment to excellence in all he did.

Dr. Blizzard's aspirations to fly began at a young age in Trinidad. He had joined a scouts and a cadet program where he was educated and tutored by members of the British Air Force who were stationed on the island.

Later, while studying abroad in Scotland, Dr. Blizzard joined the Tiger Moth Club and learned to fly the aircraft that the club was named after.

Unfortunately, due to racist practices, Dr. Blizzard was barred from obtaining his license. However, he later earned his small plane license in Trinidad during the 1960's.

In 1958, Dr. Blizzard and his wife immigrated to Canada where he would begin his medical studies at the University of Western Ontario and joined the Reserve Officer Training Program with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). Through the Reserve Officer Training Program, Dr. Blizzard worked as the Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Moosejaw Base Surgeon while completing his ground and in-flight training on a part-time basis, often staying up until the early morning to complete his studies. After earning his wings in 1968, Dr. Blizzard and his family returned to Trinidad to open a medical practice, fulfilling a personal commitment to provide medical care on the island. Dr. Blizzard and his wife operated this practice for almost a decade.

During Dr. Blizzard's military career, he served for a total of 16 years as a flight surgeon, a military jet pilot, and as an advisor to the Surgeon General in Aviation Medicine. Notably, he served as Squadron Leader, Major and Deputy Commanding Officer with the RCAF National Defence Medical Detachment and was posted to a number of communities in northern and eastern Canada. In 1978, Dr. Blizzard was the first doctor on site during the Operation MAGNET mission, which airlifted Vietnamese refugees from Kuala Lumpur to Canada.

Following his retirement from the RCAF in 1983, Dr. Blizzard continued applying himself by working with the Department of Civil Aviation, serving as a safety advisor on several issues including pilot fatigue, jet lag, and proper in-flight care.

Being inducted into the CMHF is no small feat. By celebrating Canadian heroes who have worked to advance healthcare worldwide, the CMHF strives to foster future generations of Canadian health professionals through local and national youth education programs and awards. The hall of fame acts as a tribute to Canada's rich medical history and can be viewed both digitally and in person in London, Ontario. Now inducted, Dr. Blizzard's legacy will be available for all to view and appreciate.

Accessed through Salute magazine:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2023/07/major-retired-blizzard-inducted-into-canadian-medical-hall-of-fame.html>

## ON TARGET: CANADIAN SURFACE COMBATANT TO COST A BOATLOAD OF MONEY

By Scott Taylor



On Saturday March 8 a major defence procurement announcement was made by the Department of National Defence, yet it caused barely a ripple through Canadian news media.

There was so little commentary over the announcement that one suspects the timing on the release was deliberate. Given that we are in the midst of a damaging trade war with the United States, and one of President Donald Trump's pet peeve's is Canada's lack of defence spending, one would think the Liberals would have wanted to make the most out of an \$8 billion contract to build warships?

Instead DND held a hastily announced, late Friday afternoon technical briefing for select media, prior to the Saturday morning, March 8 official announcement. With parliament prorogued until March 24 and the Liberal Party leadership race winner to be announced the following day, the shipbuilding contract announcement unsurprisingly dropped into a media void.

It shouldn't have, and here's why. What was announced was an initial \$8 billion contract for Irving Shipbuilding of Halifax to begin the construction of the first three Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) warships. However, buried in the fine print was the fact that the total cost to build these three warships is expected to be a whopping \$22.2 billion.

That equals \$7.4 billion per ship. Given that Canada has announced they will be purchasing 15 CSC warships in total, for those doing the math, that amounts to over \$108 billion in total for this project.

As most Canadians are not in the habit of shopping for modern warships that staggering cost may seem a little excessive. To be honest, it is obscenely excessive.

To give it some perspective we need to go back to the origins of this major procurement project. The Royal Canadian Navy planners wanted 15 ships to replace the now retired Iroquois Class destroyers and the 12 Halifax Class frigates which continue to toil past their service expectancy date.

The initial construction cost for these 15 ships was an estimated \$14 billion. But the Royal Canadian Navy jettisoned that figure and in 2008 the CSC budget was set at \$26.2 billion. That price tag included the construction of the vessels, infrastructure, project management, spare parts and some ammunition.

But since then the costs of the CSC has been climbing steadily. Several years ago, the Department of National Defence had put the cost at between \$56 billion and \$60 billion, and its officials insisted that would not go up. In 2022, the Parliamentary Budget Officer estimated the total cost of the Canadian Surface Combatant program, including development and acquisition, to be \$84.5 billion.

The design of Canada's CSC is to be based on the BAE Type 26 destroyer which is currently being built for the Britain's Royal Navy. While the Canadian design will be slightly larger and heavier, the British project is pegged at \$15 billion (CDN) to acquire 8 ships.

Again for the amateur mathematician that means Canada would be paying more than double the amount per ship if Blair's estimate was correct. We now know it was not.

Another comparative shipbuilding cost yardstick for the laymen would be the Royal Navy's recent acquisition of two Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers. These behemoths weigh 80,000 tons each and house up to 36 warplanes. The total cost was \$12 billion (CDN) or \$6 billion per aircraft carrier.

Keep in mind Canada is buying 8,000 ton CSC destroyers for \$7.2 billion each.

For a Canadian comparison, back in the early 1990's Canada acquired the 12 Halifax Class frigates for a total construction cost of \$4.3 billion, or \$350 million per ship. Allowing for inflation, that would be roughly \$700 million per ship in 2025 dollars. That is a far cry from \$7.4 billion per CSC warship.

Which is why my friends, the Liberals chose to announce the latest contract for this project in the dead of night. Or in this case, on a mid-March Saturday morning.

