



# HELMET LINER GAZETTE

## Flag survives Boer War, eBay

By Virginia Beaton *The Maple Leaf*



HALIFAX — A Canadian Red Ensign that survived the Boer War and eBay has returned to Nova Scotia. Rear-Admiral (Ret) Roger Girouard, former commander of Maritime Forces Pacific, donated the ensign to The Army Museum at the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site earlier this year.

“I knew it had to come home, and that’s why we are here today,” RAdm Girouard said during the informal presentation. “I’m really honoured to be able to close the loop on this beautiful little artefact.”

The ensign’s story began in the hands of an as yet unidentified Nova Scotia soldier named Macdonald, who was a member of E Battery, the Canadian Horse Artillery. Macdonald took the ensign with him when he and his regiment sailed from Halifax January 21, 1900, on board SS *Laurentian*, heading for the Boer War in South Africa. His family kept it for many years before it ended up on eBay.

Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret) James Glass, a former American army officer, found the ensign on eBay in July 2006, and bought it. The seller told him the history that linked the Red Ensign to Nova Scotia. “I was fascinated with Canadian naval history,” LCol Glass said.

### Return to Nova Scotia

LCol Glass decided to give the ensign to RAdm Girouard – the two had met five years earlier in British Columbia and struck up a friendship. When he handed it over, LCol Glass also provided RAdm Girouard with a written history. Knowing the military history of Halifax and having lived there, RAdm Girouard believed the pennant belonged in The Army Museum at the Citadel.

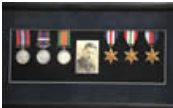
### Unusual design

“It is a rather unusual ensign because the crest on it was a proposed ensign from 1873 and was never approved,” said Jim Selby, curator of The Army Museum. “It only has five provinces on it. I assume the reason it wasn’t approved was that it was the year Prince Edward Island came into Confederation and it is not shown on the crest. There was a whole series of Red Ensigns over the years that were proposed and not approved. This was one of them.”

Bruce Gilchrist, vice chair of The Army Museum, said the museum is doing a lot of in-depth research to identify exactly which Macdonald carried it – in Nova Scotia, the surname Macdonald is very common, and identifying the correct soldier is a challenge. More than 7 000 Canadians, including 12 nurses, served alongside British troops in South Africa. Of these, 267 were killed.

## Owner of Second World War medals sought

By Sgt Dan Milburn *The Maple Leaf*



EDMONTON, Alberta — Master Corporal Larry Young, of CFB Edmonton, had no idea what he was getting into when he walked into Folkgraphics Frames in Edmonton recently. The long-standing wholesale and framing business specializes in custom work for thousands of clients.

MCpl Young, who works for the Service Person Holding List (SPHL), was there to pick up his unit’s monthly order of frames for departing members when store operations manager Heather Robertson asked for his help.

### Mystery surfaces

In 1995, the shop was engaged by Markiw Imports Inc. to build a custom shadow box for six Second World War medals and a black-and-white photo of the person believed to be the recipient. The items were dropped off December 14, 1995, for framing and were to be picked up December 20 – but they never were.

The store searched for the owner of these medals for years. Staff even took the framed medals with them when the shop moved.

“We handed the medals over to MCpl Young,” Ms. Robertson says, “to see if the military could help in the search since Markiw Imports Inc. has gone out of business.”

Upon his return to the base, MCpl Young informed Captain Steve Lowery, SPHL Edmonton commanding officer, of what he had just received. “Someone is missing these medals and we want to get them back to their rightful owner,” says Capt Lowery. “We are hoping that by getting the word out, someone will come forward.”

If the picture looks at all familiar or you think you might know who owns the medals, please contact Capt Steve Lowery at [Lowery.JS@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Lowery.JS@forces.gc.ca).

### The medals

The six medals in the case are:

- The War Medal 1939-45, awarded to all full-time personnel of the armed forces and merchant marines serving a minimum 28 days between September 3, 1939 and September 2, 1945
- The Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, granted to persons of any rank in the Army, Navy or Air Force of Canada who voluntarily served on Active Service and honourably completed eighteen months (540 days) total voluntary service from September 3, 1939 to March 1, 1947

- The Defence Medal, awarded to Canadians for six months service in Britain between September 3, 1939 and May 8, 1945
- The France and Germany Star, awarded for one day or more of service in France, Belgium, Holland or Germany between June 6, 1944 (D-Day) and May 8, 1945
- The Italy Star: awarded for one day operational service in Sicily or Italy between June 11, 1943 and May 8, 1945
- and The 1939-45 Star, awarded for six months service on active operations for Army and Navy, and two months for active aircrew, between September 2, 1939 and May 8, 1945 (Europe) or September 2, 1945 (Pacific).

## Forgotten medals back with veteran's family

### The Maple Leaf

EDMONTON — Medals belonging to a Second World War veteran have been returned to his family thanks to the efforts of national media and CFB/ASU Edmonton staff.

The medals were left in an Edmonton framing shop in December 1995 but were never picked up. Store staff searched for the owner for years and even took the framed medals with them when they moved shop. Finally, the medals were handed over to the CF in November 2008 with the hope that the rightful owner could be found.

National and local media ran the story, with almost instant results.

While Merlin Friel was getting ready to watch the evening news on 10 November, his phone was ringing off the hook with family members from across the country telling him to turn on his TV and watch the news.

"I was about to phone my uncle when I saw it on television," he says. "That's my grandfather!" I told my kids. I got goose bumps when I recognized his face."

James (Jim) Friel enrolled in Edmonton with 61 Field Battery, known today as 20th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA. He served with the Canadian Army from 1939 to 1945, and saw action in Italy, Germany and France with 8 Armoured Field Regiment.

As well as receiving six medals, veteran James Friel was awarded a Commander-in-Chief Certificate for Outstanding Service during the campaign in Northwest Europe. The six medals include the Italy Star, the France and Germany Star, the 1939-45 Star, the Defence Medal, the Canada Volunteer Service Medal and the 1939-45 Medal.

After the story was run by the local television station and posted on the Army Web site, CFB Edmonton heard from callers claiming to know the owner of the medals. Service records were checked through Veterans Affairs and it was determined that Lance Sergeant James Friel was the unknown soldier in the picture.

He worked and lived in the Edmonton area until he passed away in 1972. It is believed that his wife dropped the medals off to get them framed in 1995 and then forgot about them. Mr. Friel's grandson, Merlin Friel, plans to hang the medals in his office so he can look at them every day.

## Forgotten women veterans of Second World War

By Alex Burke *The Maple Leaf*



THUNDER BAY, Ontario — The stories of Canadian Aboriginal women who served during the Second World War have been ignored by modern-day historians. *Invisible Women: World War II Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada*, is an attempt to fill this void.

Author Grace Poulin's 142-page book examines the lives of 18 Canadians who served proudly in the Army but who have been forgotten.

"While I was doing my undergrad at Lakehead University, in Indigenous Learning, I discovered there was nothing on Aboriginal servicewomen during the Second World War – the odd picture here and there and maybe a little anecdote, but always related to her brother or father who was in the military," Ms. Poulin said about what motivated her to write the book. "They had never been recognized either by the military or by mainstream society. And also, it was to alert mainstream society that Aboriginal women did serve in the World War II military."



Challenges for the women varied. Veteran Mamie Dunlop is one of the women featured in Ms. Poulin's book. She overcame challenges of basic training as well as fearful nights on patrol with only a siren. "Oh, it was tough," she said. "I was put on guard duty and all we had was a siren to hold onto and we had to turn it on if we saw anything and I was scared. You go checking the grounds at night and you can see all sorts of shadows. But I never put my [siren] on."

Ms. Dunlop echoes the feeling of being invisible. Previously employed as a driver and forestry worker, she joined the Army to follow in the footsteps of her brother and fiancée. She was posted first to an officers' mess, followed by a kitchen.

Ms. Poulin acknowledges that she had her own presumptions disproven by the book. "I didn't think some of the women that joined up— Aboriginal women—I didn't think they had the education that they really did. There were nurses and stuff like that and I didn't know."

She also came to some unexpected conclusions brought about by her research. She found that many of the aboriginal women were mistakenly thought of as members of other ethnic groups. "Not everybody suffered racial discrimination," she said. "I would say the biggest discrimination they faced was gender discrimination. And that kind of surprised me, although I don't know why. I think women in the military today still face some gender discrimination."

Ms. Poulin also found that their innate naïveté presented a challenge for the women. "There was not the sexual education there is today," she said, "and a lot of girls didn't know anything about men. There was nothing the military taught to them, either, to familiarize themselves about habits of men. And the officers thought the girls were there to service the men."

Ms. Poulin's book has unearthed a proud history of patriotism and military valour. "It is imperative that generations of Canadians understand the sacrifices and contributions made by these women."

To obtain a copy of *Invisible Women: World War II Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada*, please contact Grace Poulin by telephone at 807-344-8860 or by e-mail at [gracepoulin@tbaytel.net](mailto:gracepoulin@tbaytel.net).

## Korean War vet remembers battle for Hill 187

By Alex Burke *The Maple Leaf*



Terry Meagher is one veteran who hasn't forgotten the Korean War (1950-1953).

In October 1952, he was deployed to Korea with the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, a part of the 1st Commonwealth Division. He served as a rifleman and radio operator.

The Canadians patrolled and engaged in trench warfare. Beyond a mortal enemy and one of the harshest winters in Korean history (1953), troops faced exhaustion during evenings of guard duty. Water was scarce and improvised heating often led to fires in bunkers containing live grenades.

### Chinese attack Hill 187

Mr. Meagher participated in the battle of Hill 187, May 2-3, 1953. Two officers he knew, Lieutenants Gerard Meynell and Douglas Banton, both of The Royal Canadian Regiment, were killed on May 3.

"I was in my slit trench at 2130 and it was pretty black. I heard our Able Company patrol, led by Lt Meynell, gets hit. There were about 20 of them out there by the Sandaechon River. I heard bursts of gunfire which meant the patrol was ambushed. And then I heard the staccato sound of a Sten gun, our light machinegun. And then I heard a soggy grenade go and that was it. Our patrol had walked into about 400 assault troops that were headed to assault Hill 187 and Charlie Company.

"Lt Banton, who had been my platoon commander, was a gung-ho guy who always got to places first and he felt he could win the Victoria Cross. That's what he told us back in Canada. He headed down into the minefield gap, put up his arms and said, 'Come through me, come through me!' to the patrol that was scattered and wounded. He lasted about two minutes. There is a rule in the front line that you never stand up when you can sit down and never sit down when you can lie down.

"After the patrol got hit, a bombardment came in on the Princess Pat's to the right of us. A bombardment means that you can't distinguish one shell from the other. The sky lit up there and I thought there was an attack coming. They lost two soldiers in it. Then, there was artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire coming from the Chinese all over the place. They had massed their guns for the attack. The telephone lines linking the battalion were destroyed by the guns.

"At exactly two minutes to 12 on May 2, there was a 20-minute bombardment and everything was shaken. The place lit up; it was brighter than day. Grassfires broke out all over the valley and all over the hills, the minefield, wire and trenches were destroyed. The bunkers caved in because the bombardment was so heavy. And the Chinese came in under the artillery barrage."

### Recognition for comrades

Mr. Meagher is seeking recognition for the heroism he witnessed while serving in Korea. He feels these Canadians made a huge impact.

"When I went there, the people were eating out of garbage bins and begging for food. When I went back two years ago, the population was robust, well fed, well educated. It was a democracy that had problems but it was working and I consider it my second country," he said.

The Korean War Book of Remembrance lists the 516 Canadians who died in Korea. It is accessible on-line at:

<http://www.vacacc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=collections/books/bKorea>

## The personal battle on Hill 532



My name is Rod Middleton. I served the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry during the Korean War.

I served as an infantry platoon commander, and some of my experiences included mounting attacks on several Chinese features, and my most memorable experience was probably an attack that we mounted on Hill 532 on the 7th of March. The Chinese had heavily defended this feature with bunkers, trench systems and so on, and despite our best efforts and heavy casualties, we were not able to take the hill that day.

My own account of the battle reminds me of crawling down a Chinese communication trench—these trenches were about 18 inches wide and about 18 inches deep— and meeting a Chinese soldier head-on at a turn in the trench.

I'm not sure who was more surprised, he or I, but he stood up to fire at me with his rifle ... luckily for me, it jammed. I was attempting to shoot him with my pistol but my pistol jammed because earlier, in a bunker-clearing incident, I had changed magazines and I guess I caught up a bit of mud on the end of the magazine, which caused it to jam. I very quickly cleared the action and dispatched this young soldier, and then I was faced with the prospect of having to climb over his still-warm body and proceeding further up the trench, and that is something that has lived with me to this very day.

Later in that action, I was slightly wounded, evacuated to a mobile army surgical hospital where I only spent a day, and then I returned to new duties.

I look back on the Korean experience as a very exciting time of my life. I regret the loss of the soldiers, comrades but, I think, having returned to Korea in 1998, I can see what a prosperous, wonderful country that is today, not the war-torn, treeless, bomb-scarred, shell-scarred terrain that I left.

You know, I enjoyed my time in the service. I served for another twenty-odd years [and] retired finally in 1976.

For more veterans' stories, go to *The Memory Project Digital Archive* at [www.thememoryproject.com/digitalarchive/index.cfm](http://www.thememoryproject.com/digitalarchive/index.cfm).

## Morse Code in Africa?

By Cpl Hervé Mboumba *The Maple Leaf*

My childhood memories are marked by a traditional communication instrument, the nkul, that I will call a "Gabonese sound messenger" (GSM).

I remember the GSM being used in a Gabonese village lost in the heart of the tropical forests on the banks of the Ogooué River. These villages, forgotten by the government, could not expect a modern communications infrastructure, since installing a telephone was a luxury reserved for government ministers, even in many African cities.

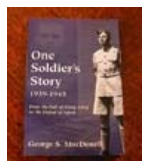
The GSM is an almost cylindrical log about one metre long. It has two circular bases approximately 30 cm in diameter. The log has been carefully hollowed out, with a slit about 10 cm long on the top. Using two sticks, a drummer beats on this log, which is placed on the ground, to send messages to neighbouring villages several kilometres away. The village receiving the message then acknowledges receipt.

The instrument was used to announce such things as births, deaths and gatherings. What was fantastic and even astonishing, were the rhythmic combinations achieved by the messenger, which were far from simple; three beats announced a birth, four beats reported a death, etc. The drummer had to know how to handle the sticks and be familiar with the different rhythmic combinations. I still remember the man bent over his nkul, sending a message, as if it were yesterday.

Thirty years later, when I enlisted in the CF, the Communications and Electronics Branch to be specific, I discovered that the Morse code used to send coded messages had an eerie resemblance to GSM messages. Although the GSM has given way to cellular telephones in recent years, it nonetheless admirably met the communication needs of the Gabonese for a long time. You could say that the nkul is a close relative of Morse code.

## First to fight, last to come home

By Steve Fortin *The Maple Leaf*



It's one of the forgotten battles of the Second World War. So many perished without notice in that worldwide conflict, but for the 2 000 or so Canadians who were sent to the shores of the Pearl River on the southern coast of China to defend the small, insular British colony of Hong Kong, it is essential that their suffering—and exploits—never be forgotten.

Seventeen-year-old George MacDonnell joined the Canadian Army Service Corps September 2, 1939. Because of his youth, he couldn't be sent to England with his comrades in the First Division; instead, he was assigned to the Royal Canadian Regiment and, finally, to the Royal Rifles of Canada. In less than a year, Mr. MacDonnell had been promoted to sergeant and in November 1941, he and his men—1 975, to be exact—were sent to Hong Kong to defend the British colony as members of "C" Force.

Just three weeks after arriving, the Canadian soldiers of "C" Force were engaged by the Japanese Army, which outnumbered the combined Canadian, British, Indian and Hong Kong forces by eight to one.

Mr. MacDonnell remembers it like it was yesterday. "The bombing started on December 7, 1941. Japanese troops parachuted in under the pall of night and quickly outnumbered us. We defended ourselves like rabid dogs and, without flinching, fought what was obviously going to be a losing battle with everything that was in us. We knew there was no hope of winning this battle given that we couldn't be resupplied or reinforced. We were told to surrender, but we refused. It was only on the order of the Governor of Hong Kong that we finally did. By the end, every soldier in the "C" Force had either been killed or captured."

For the survivors, the hell of war was just getting started. Over the next four years, the surviving allied prisoners were shipped from one Japanese POW camp to another. The stronger prisoners were made to endure forced labour and slavery; many became skin and bones. "A normal adult male needs 3 500 calories per day to stay healthy," Mr. MacDonnell says. "Our captors would systematically limit us to 1 500 calories per day, a debilitating diet that brought us closer to death with each passing day. We were spared from certain death when we were finally rescued in September 1945; there was no way any of us could have survived another winter of near starvation."

The living conditions in the POW camps were inhumane. Piled on top of each other in vermin-infested huts, they suffered from dysentery, malaria and diphtheria, not to mention all the injuries they sustained from guards' repeated beatings. In spite of it all, the Canadian soldiers showed great courage. Mr. MacDonnell was in a group of soldiers forced to work in a shipyard. Far from being defeated, he and the other POWs would undermine the Japanese Army at every turn despite their lamentable physical condition. "For us, the war wasn't over," he says. "We would sabotage what we could in the shipyards, especially the ships' engines. It didn't dawn on the Japanese that we had the brains or the guts; they underestimated us."

The soldiers' courage came at a price: 290 Canadians died in the fighting that preceded their capture and almost as many lost their lives in the camps. Today, Mr. MacDonnell is dedicated to ensuring that no one forgets the sacrifice of the Canadian soldiers who suffered in Japanese POW camps. "Ours is the story of poorly planned military decisions," he says. "After all, the entire "C" Force was wiped out in the space of three weeks! Still, we always believed that the Allied Forces would win even if our own situation seemed desperate at times. We fought to the bitter end. We were the first Canadian soldiers to engage in active combat and the last ones to come home."

Because the written word never dies, Mr. MacDonnell decided to write his memoirs in *One Soldier's Story*, chronicling his life from his enlistment through the Battle of Hong Kong and his time as a POW to his transition to life after the war.

The veteran also enjoys meeting with young soldiers to trade stories. In early December, Mr. MacDonnell will return to the place where it all started for him – CFB Valcartier, where he completed his training before being deployed at the end of 1939.

"The times may change, but one thing never does," Mr. MacDonnell would advise men and women about to be deployed, especially in Afghanistan. "Freedom isn't free; it comes at a price and it is our duty to defend it."

## Making the Right Decision

By Cheryl MacLeod *The Maple Leaf*



Under cover of darkness, they shift their bodies and move slowly toward their vehicles. This is a low-threat situation but they have to be ready for anything. These strategically planned movements must become as natural as putting on their shoes. Someone's life will depend on how quickly they react to any kind of situation.

This is a snippet of the training for the Close Protection (CP) team. CP operatives provide close protection for general officers and visiting dignitaries, often in places such as Afghanistan, allowing commanders to leave their safety to the CP team and focus on the mission.



Not so long ago, CP training, taught by the military police, was open only to MP personnel. Now, it's open to Regular and Reserve Force personnel in all trades at the non-commissioned member level. It is a physically demanding job for dedicated and mature professionals, with a rigorous selection process and challenging training.

This type of work is not for everyone, but those who complete the six-week training say it is the most demanding thing they've done – and they enjoyed every minute, even the painful parts. "If you can think outside the box," says CP directing staff and Regular Force military police officer Major Simon Trudeau, "are a good problem solver and quick at thinking on your feet, this is your kind of job."

The CP course has gone through changes since it was held for the first time, in 2005 in the US. It's always evolving to meet the changes in the world today.

One change has seen more days added to the training period. "The program has evolved from 26 training days to over 34 days," Maj Trudeau says. "We [course staff] looked at tweaking and changing the program to meet our needs. We found we needed to expand our training in some aspects and drop others. We wanted to have more training for things like attacks on principals [the VIPs], so we added more days."



Many of the course instructors are former CP students who come back to share their real-time experiences – an excellent way to keep the course up-to-date and on track with what's happening in the world. "Lessons learned from the guys returning from theatre are great," says Maj Trudeau. "Their experience helps take the training to the next level . . . the needs may change, so we need to change our focus a bit."

Candidates apply to the CF Provost Marshal unit and are selected after meeting strict CP criteria. Once selected, they move to the training area for six weeks full of physical and mental challenges that will test their suitability for the team. This year, for the first time, candidates were introduced to the course with 10 hours of defensive tactics. "They get to meet one another by basically throwing one another around a room," says Maj Karl Heck, course director. "So this gets them a little sore to begin with, but this is the way they're going to feel for a while," he said with a grin.

Following this introduction, candidates complete a driving package. Instructors assess candidates' driving skills as they put them through their paces on a series of well laid out driving tracks with everything from pop-up enemy targets to narrow-street obstacles. Candidates' skills in close-formation driving are also tested.

"This is the morale-building part of the course," Maj Heck says. "There is a certificate given at the end of this part, whether they finish the course or not. There is no real pass or fail." Instructors get a better idea of who their skilled drivers are, and will start to move candidates into roles such as drivers, bodyguards and team leaders. "This will help us sort out who the drivers are. This is the relax phase of the course."

Candidates then move on to a block on weapons. This is where the pace is kicked up a notch. The ranges used for this training are very different from what the candidates are familiar with, so they have to learn to adapt very quickly. At the end of this phase, "there is a mandatory test on the weapons," Maj Heck says, "which they must pass. If, after one retest, they fail by even one point, they're gone."

If candidates are dropped during the training and sent back to their units, they are not penalized. "This course is very tough and demanding," says Maj Heck. "To have made it this far is quite an accomplishment."

Those who are left heave a collective sigh of relief – but not for long. The focus shifts to CP skills, things like walking in formation, arrivals and departures, driving in motorcade formation, and learning how to meet and brief their principals. Candidates continue to train every day. While leaving and returning to the training area, they practise everything from meeting their VIPs to formation driving.

"We found in earlier courses that we weren't doing this and, when it came to the final exercise, they were very rusty in the basic stuff," Maj Heck says. "We were commuting anyway, so we should take advantage of this training aid. We made it an integral part of the training package so, when they get to the end, this stuff is instinctive."

In the final exercise, all the skills learned over five weeks of training come into play with a real-time CP operation and a visiting VIP. Candidates have to organize the four-day VIP visit from start to finish. A range of venues is used and the candidates must react and respond to a variety of "fastballs" such as coming under attack and changing plans. "This is a bit of a surprise to some people, when all the parts start to come together," says Maj Heck. "That's why this isn't for everybody."

The personnel who make it here are a solid notch above the average member of the CF – they have to be, because its dangerous work and they have to have their act together, Maj Heck says.

Looking back on his 31-year career in the CF, Maj Heck comments on how this generation of CF personnel is different – people want to stay close to home and not move their families. This is foreign to him. "People of my generation joined the CF to go off to see the world and have some adventure," he said. "So for those in this generation who think the way we did, this is a great line of work, this is what you should be looking for in the CF– kick-ass training you're not going to find anywhere else."

Comprehensive information about the CP Team and training is available at [www.vcds.forces.gc.ca/cfpm-gpfc/index-eng.asp](http://www.vcds.forces.gc.ca/cfpm-gpfc/index-eng.asp) and in CANFORGEN 197/08 241827Z OCT 08.

### **Afghanistan's first wind farm opens**

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan's first wind farm officially began operations November 13 in Panjsher province. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held outside the governor's home, which sits at the base of the hill where the energy collection facility is located.

The ceremony was attended by Afghan officials, including the country's first vice president, Ahmed Zia Massoud, who spoke about the successes of the province that is known for its untapped natural resources.

"It is hoped this project will signify the start of big positive changes, not just for this area, but for all of Afghanistan," Vice President Massoud said, going on to explain the choice of the location. "Security will always be a concern for anything we develop in this country. But Panjsher's geographical location and well-established security made this province a good choice to usher in the development we hope to bring to our country."

The wind farm, an eco-friendly hybrid power generation and distribution system, will generate the main source of power for the Panjsher government compound and the immediate surrounding areas.

The project began in April 2007, and local citizens built it under the supervision of contractors from Empower Consultants LTD, from New Zealand, and the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF's) Panjsher Provincial Reconstruction Team.

Rear-Admiral Matthieu Borsboom, ISAF's senior officer responsible for stability operations, attended the ceremony on behalf of ISAF Commander General David McKiernan. Following the ceremony, RAdm Borsboom shared an informal luncheon with Panjsher Governor Haji Bahlol Bahij. "Panjsher can be called an example," the rear-admiral said. "They have a vision, both short-term and long-term, for development, and there's not enough recognition that goes out to the hard work of the governor, his staff and the people who reside in the province. They work together, as Governor Bahij explained, for the continued success of the province, and that shows signs of a promising future for all of Afghanistan."

## Master gunner qualification more than gunnery

The Army technical warrant officer (ATWO) program is a Royal Military College Department of Applied Military Science (AMS) program. The program's primary purpose is to support the CF by providing warrant officers with a solid academic foundation in science and technology, and management and critical thinking skills, to enable them to be key players in operational capability generation and management for the Land Force.



Based on the master gunner course offered in Gagetown until 2003, the ATWO program has evolved to offer much more than gunnery, covering subjects such as communications; information management; intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance; vehicles; weapons; defence management; trials and system engineering, to name a few. It prepares warrant officers to serve at the operational and strategic level in the institutional Army.

"The ATWO program has contributed to my effectiveness in my new posting," says Engineer Branch member Master Warrant Officer Ted Gombert, an ATWO program graduate who is the first non-commissioned member director for a major project (Army Heavy Equipment Replacement and Mechanical Breaching Systems) within Land Force HQ. "It is very rewarding it is to bring my new skills to the capability development world."

Warrant Officer Alain Bernard (now commissioned) is a member of the Armour Corps and a 2006 ATWO program graduate. He was amazed to realize how much the program helped him not only to understand all the technical aspects of a working group on the cooling of the electronics on the Leopard 2A6Ms, but also to propose a working solution.

WO Dave Aldred, a member of The Royal Regiment of Canada Artillery, participated in a Joint Tactical Data Link Advisory Panel. "The military communication, information system and ISTAR courses," he says, "really contributed to my understanding of the complex issues facing a Joint, Interagency, Multinational and Public oriented command structure."

Today's graduates are facing challenges far more complex than gunnery. AMS programs benefit both program graduates and the CF.

## Changes to the Memorial Cross

The Government of Canada has approved changes to the Regulations of the Memorial Cross, a memento granted since 1919 to the loved ones of our fallen military personnel. The most important change is that the new rules in place since 1 January 2007 (all service related-deaths covered instead of just mission-related, three Crosses instead of two and recipients designated by the member instead of by regulation) are made retroactive to 7 October 2001 so that all service-related deaths which occurred since the beginning of the international campaign against terrorism are treated in a similar fashion.

The families of CF members who died in a Special Duty Areas (SDA) between 7 October 2001 and 31 December 2006 have already received one or two Crosses under the old rules. They will now be able to obtain additional ones to reach a total of three.

Deaths outside of SDAs between 7 October 2001 and 31 December 2006 were excluded from qualification under the old rules. These families will now be granted three Crosses.

Because these members never had a chance to fill the Designation of Memorial Cross Recipients form (DND 2105), the recipients for each case will be designated by the executor or administrator of the estate or the liquidator of the succession of the member. A letter, signed by the executor administrator or liquidator and including his/her name and address, details of the recipients (including their full names, address and their relation to the deceased) and the name of the primary beneficiary of the estate shall be forwarded to DH&R.

The chain of command is encouraged to communicate with the families of our fallen to inform them of these changes, obtain the required information, pass it on to Director of Honors and Recognition and coordinate the presentations.

All CF members are reminded of the importance to complete the DND 2105 to designate their Memorial Cross recipients to ensure the appropriate and timely recognition of their family in the event of a death.

These changes to the Memorial Cross now make a more comprehensive recognition package by which Canada expresses its sorrow and sympathy to our bereaved families. More details can be found on the DH&R web site.

## Keeping them close to your heart

*By Cheryl MacLeod The Maple Leaf*

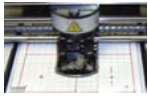
They came in red or green and hung on butcher's twine around their necks. Today, soldiers still wear them but they have a different look.

Identity discs, better known as dog tags, were first used by British and Commonwealth armies during the First World War. Made of aluminum, only one was issued. A second disc, green in colour, was introduced in 1916, and it was to be left with the body. Several disc designs were trialed during the Second World War but, in the end, it was a German design that was adopted, made of monel, a nickel-copper alloy.

During the Vietnam War, US soldiers placed rubber silencers on their dog tags or taped them together so the enemy would not hear the metallic clanking. Some chose to wear one tag around their neck, and the other laced to their boot.

There is a myth surrounding the notch situated in one end of a dog tag. Supposedly, it was there so that if a soldier found one of his comrades on the battlefield, he could take one tag to the commanding officer and kick the other between the dead soldier's teeth to ensure that the tag would remain with the body and be identified. In fact, the notch was there simply to hold the tag in place on the embossing machine.





Dog tags have taken on a new look these days—no more twine, paper or wood—and even a new role. One young woman has found a unique use for dog tags – to help ease her loneliness and feel a little closer to her military husband when he is deployed. “We were separated for over a year before we got married,” says Sarah Cameron, “and, through necessity, we wanted to come up with something we could keep and that Neil could wear to work.”

Having moved from her home in the UK to Gagetown more than a year ago, doing dog-tag research and starting her company, Dog Tag Companions, kept Ms. Cameron busy while she was getting used to living in Canada. “I’m getting on fine, but I think last winter in New Brunswick was just for me,” she says with a laugh. “We had more snow than anyone had seen in years, so if I can cope with that, I can cope with anything.”

What’s unique about the tags, she says, is that they’re personal. “With a [stolen] locket, they can take the photos out and sell it, but this dog tag is a piece of metal that has been engraved for you. It’s of absolutely no use to anyone else other than you, so they aren’t going to want to steal it.”

Dog Tag Companions impact-engraves photographic images onto metal dog tags; when moved, the images can be almost holographic.

Husband Captain Neil Cameron, a trial officer from Land Forces Trials and Evaluation Unit at CFB Gagetown, is her strongest supporter and was one of her first customers. “I know it helped him a lot,” she says. If her husband was having a bad day at work, he would think about the tag and it would make him feel closer to her. “[The tag] is a little reminder, when you have this thing close to your chest and you know that they wanted you to have it. It makes you feel special.”

The limit on the amount of kit personnel can take with them makes these tags very practical because they can be attached to their dog tags and take up no extra room. Capt Marte Rosales, from 4 Air Defence Regiment in Gagetown, who was deployed to Afghanistan, is a customer. “It was nice to have her [Angela, his fiancée, now wife] close to my heart.”

Many of the soldiers are old-school, said Capt Rosales, and carry photos of loved ones in their helmets. “The tags are very convenient and more durable than a picture,” he says. “These won’t get ruined when you put them in your helmet. And it’s great to have your loved ones with you all the time.”

## Another first for Padre Callaghan

*by Dave Noppe The Maple Leaf*

Padre Laurelle Callaghan is accustomed to being something of a trail blazer. She was the first female chaplain deployed to Kosovo and to Afghanistan and she is now the first female chaplain to achieve the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

“I’ve had two roto zeros and my family teases me because I couldn’t get past the camping portion when I was in Girl Guides,” LCol Callaghan said with a laugh.

Married to a career air force officer, LCol Callaghan joined the Canadian Forces after serving as a United Church minister for five years.

“I joined because I had a passion for what we could do for families. In 1988 when I joined and in 1977 when we married there weren’t the kinds of resources we have now. You can’t make changes from the outside,” she said.

Padre Callaghan will now be returning to Edmonton as Area Chaplain of Land Force Western Area (LFWA) and she is currently studying for her Doctorate of Ministry through St. Paul’s University in Ottawa.

“As the Area Chaplain I will supervise the regular and reserve force chaplains. It is a very large and unique pastoral charge.”

Colonel John Fletcher, Director of Chaplain Services has been LCol Callaghan’s immediate supervisor for more than four years and he has clearly seen her potential.

“She’s an incredible chaplain with tremendous pastoral skills as well as great leadership skills. I know I am not the only one who has thought she has tremendous potential.”

In 1981 Georgene Kling became the first ordained female chaplain and there are now 27 female chaplains in the CF. Nine are currently serving at the rank of Major, and Padre Callaghan is the first woman to be promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel.

“Laurelle’s vast experience as a chaplain, in both deployed and garrison settings, combined with her skills as a chaplain leader, have allowed her to consistently insure the success of her chaplain teams, and often in the face of exceptional pastoral demands,”

Col Fletcher said. Col Fletcher describes LCol Callaghan as a forceful and effective communicator, a creative and faithful chaplain, and military officer who projects tremendous self-confidence, credibility and determination. “

All of these gifts have contributed to her effectiveness as a counsellor and chaplain leader, and have made her a respected member of the teams on which she has served.”

## Great story,

## VC winner Mark Donaldson drew enemy fire, saved a mate, and fought on

Mark Dodd | *January 17, 2009* Article from: [The Australian](#)

SAS trooper Mark Donaldson exposed himself so much to enemy fire that when Australia’s last VC winner heard about his award he assumed it would be posthumous.

Trooper Mark Donaldson receives his Victoria Cross from Governor General Quentin Bryce 22nd of January, 2009



Over two hours in southeastern Afghanistan last September 2, Trooper Donaldson, 29, repeatedly fought alone in open ground raked by accurate and heavy Taliban machine-gun fire to allow his wounded comrades to be dragged to safety.

Deliberate exposure to draw enemy fire away from the wounded would have been enough for a Victoria Cross recommendation, but Trooper Donaldson then sprinted 80m over the same killing ground to save the life of a seriously wounded Afghan interpreter.

In the words of the award citation, Trooper Donaldson - whose story Kevin Rudd said yesterday would be known to generations of Australian schoolchildren - reacted spontaneously to regain the initiative following an ambush that inflicted the worst casualties suffered by Australia since the Vietnam War.

Under furious enemy fire Trooper Donaldson moved rapidly between alternative positions engaging the Taliban with his M4 carbine and 66mm and 84mm shoulder-fired rockets.

"He deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire in order to draw attention to himself and thus away from wounded soldiers," the citation says.

"This selfless act alone brought enough time for those wounded to be moved to relative safety."

But, there was more.

With the wounded, nine of them Australian, piled onto the vehicles the convoy began to withdraw with covering fire provided by Afghan US and Australian special forces soldiers sheltering beside the vehicles.

Those soldiers still fit to fight had to jog alongside the vehicles.

There was no space onboard, due to the large number of wounded.

One of the last to leave, Trooper Donaldson, spotted the Afghan interpreter lying wounded in open ground more than 80m away. "His movement, once identified by the enemy, drew intense and accurate machine gun fire from entrenched positions," the citation says.

"Upon reaching the wounded coalition force interpreter, Trooper Donaldson picked him up and carried him back to the relative safety of the vehicles and then provided immediate first aid before returning to the fight."

There were so many occasions when Trooper Donaldson could have been killed in the battle that, when Australia's last VC winner, Keith Payne, 75, heard about the award his first reaction was that it would be posthumous.

"I'm absolutely delighted we have a live one," said Mr Payne, who won the VC in Vietnam in 1969. "At a party like this, the chances of coming out alive are pretty negative and he never got hit and that's amazing."

The only other living Australian VC winner, Edward "Ted" Kenna, watched the ceremony on television from his Geelong nursing home. Mr McKenna won his VC in Papua New Guinea in 1945.

Mr Kenna, 89, told his daughter to say that he admired Trooper Donaldson for looking out for his mates. "He felt proud of Trooper Donaldson and thought that he was a worthy recipient," Marlene Day said. Trooper Donaldson at a ceremony at Government House yesterday became the 96th Australian to win the country's highest award for gallantry. He is also the first to win the Victoria Cross of Australia, as it is now formally known after the imperial honours system was replaced in 1991.

A world away from the dusty mountains of Oruzgan province, the 1920s-era Canberra drawing room was filled with guests.

Among the gleaming Sam Browne belts and polished brass were former warrant officer Payne, defence force head Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, Kevin Rudd, Malcolm Turnbull, army chief Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie and former defence force chief Peter Cosgrove.

Standing at the back of the room in mufti, many wearing sunglasses to avoid identification, were more than 20 members of Trooper Donaldson's SAS sabre squadron flown in from Perth.

With guests seated, doors were closed and shortly after 11.30am, Governor-General Quentin Bryce arrived to present the award.

"Trooper Donaldson, the people with you this morning come from the deepest and warmest layers of your life, the highest ranks of your calling and the judiciary and parliament of the nation you serve," Ms Bryce said.

"We award you a decoration whose words are reserved for the incomparable and unsurpassed.

"Words whose integrity is untouched by vernacular. Words rare and revered. Gallantry, valour, self-sacrifice, devotion to duty. You have cradled life in your arms," she said in reference to Trooper Donaldson's heroic rescue of the Afghan interpreter.

"You are the finest example and inspiration, Trooper Donaldson, I salute you."

The awarding of the VC marked a "momentous day" for the Australian Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Houston said. Trooper Donaldson was now a member of a select "band of brothers", one of only 10 surviving winners of the VC alive in the world today, he said.

And as tradition dictates, Australia's most senior military officer then strode over to Trooper Donaldson and saluted him. Mr Rudd said the Afghanistan, Iraq and East Timor veteran had joined the ranks of Australian heroes and his feat of arms would become the stuff of legend.

"Trooper Donaldson, the nation salutes you. A man of valour, A man who consciously took the decision to place his own life in peril to save the lives of others. I salute you," the Prime Minister said. "Generations of school children will now know of the story of Trooper Mark Donaldson.

"It is a story of a hero, one which will be told in classrooms, workplaces and watering holes for many years to come."

After official photographs flanked with senior army brass, Australia's latest VC winner, accompanied by his wife, Emma, and two-year-old daughter, Kaylee, spoke briefly to the media.

No, he didn't think the award would change him. "I'm still Mark Donaldson, and we'll keep going from day to day and we'll see how we go," he said.

"I don't see myself as a hero, honestly. I still see myself as a soldier first and foremost."

Emma Donaldson, overcome with emotion during the ceremony, admitted to nervous moments while he was away, but said she fully supported him.

"He was married to the army before he married me, and I support him all the way."

## **Last Posting**

**Gayton, William (Bill)** Born in St Stephen NB on the 24<sup>th</sup> December 1935 passed away in St Stephen on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2008. Bill served with RCEME from November 1953 to November 1985. During his service he was posted to the following **United Nations Peacekeeping Missions**: Egypt (UNEF1) 1961, Cyprus 1964, Middle East 1977, Egypt (UNEF2) 1978-79 and was in Germany (NATO) from 1957 to 1959 and 1972 to 1975. Bill was a great supporter of **The Blue Helmets** on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November of each year on behalf of **The Blue Helmets** he laid a wreath for **Peacekeepers** at the Cenotaph in St Stephen NB



## To our Fallen Comrades

Take that rucksack off,  
The weight of the world is off your shoulders now;

Set that rifle down,  
There is no hatred here;

Take that helmet off,  
Your mind is now at ease;

Take that body armour off,  
Your heart is now set free;

Take that uniform off,  
Your soul has need to breathe;

Take those combat boots off,  
The long march at last is done;

You've done all you can & gave all you could,  
Now, you're in heaven with me.

Author Unknown

## The Canadian Peacekeeper

**Around the world we send them in  
To far off places and people within  
From far and wide they proudly serve  
To bring justice and freedom throughout the world**

**They stand their posts in their Blue berets  
The countries and people applaud the sacrifices they made  
The United Nations symbol they so proudly wave  
To defend those freedoms that have been taken away**

**The fighting is over the uneasy peace is restored  
Canadian Peacekeepers have found their ultimate reward  
The cost was so high for those who never returned  
Will those who start these conflicts never truly learn**

**Their comrades and country can never repay  
The ultimate sacrifice that some of them made  
Their families and friends can never forget  
These extraordinary Canadians many of us never truly meet**

**From Cyprus and Rwanda they have served their time.  
Many places have been forgotten but not through kind  
From Bosnia and Croatia and all points between  
The proud Canadian Peacekeeper so many have been**

**The families and country can be extremely proud  
That these citizens of Canada should be praise aloud  
Their undaunting dedication have saved the day  
So we should never forget the many untold sacrifices they made**



**Written and composed by:  
Herbert Patrick Mahar, M/Cpl (Retired)  
Charlottetown Prince Edward Island**



## "Thank You's"

Every day, be thankful for what you have and who you are.

Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings, I give thanks that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.

Even though I keep my eyes closed against the morning light as long as possible, I give thanks that I can see. Many are blind.

Even though I huddle in my bed and put off rising, I give thanks that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.

Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks

are lost, toast is burned and tempers are short, my children are so loud, I give thanks for my family. There are many who are lonely.

Even though our breakfast table never looks like the pictures in magazines and the menu is at times unbalanced, I give thanks for the food we have. There are many who are hungry.

Even though the routine of my job often is monotonous, I give thanks for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.

Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate from day to day and wish my circumstances were not so modest, I give thanks for life.

--Author Unknown

## Grandparents

An elderly woman and her little grandson, whose face was sprinkled with bright freckles, spent the day at the zoo. Lots of children were waiting in line to get their cheeks painted by a local artist who was decorating them with tiger paws.

"You've got so many freckles, there's no place to paint!" a girl in the line said to the little fella.

Embarrassed, the little boy dropped his head. His grandmother knelt down next to him. "I love your freckles. When I was a little girl I always wanted freckles, she said, while tracing her finger across the child's cheek. "Freckles are beautiful!"

The boy looked up, "Really?"

"Of course," said the grandmother. "Why, just name me one thing that's prettier than freckles."

The little boy thought for a moment, peered intensely into his grandma's face, and softly whispered, "Wrinkles."

## Notice

### The Blue Helmets

#### Requires your assistance in RECRUITING

Contact fellow Veterans of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions in your area and let them know about our association. Tell them about the new Membership Fee Structure of \$25.00 one time shot and not having to worry about yearly renewal.

If they have internet capabilities, they can visit the website at [www.thebluehelmets.ca](http://www.thebluehelmets.ca) where they can view all the information and also be able to download a membership application form for printing.

Recruiting posters will also be available for download and printing from the website.

For those who do not have internet capabilities, they can contact me by telephone at 1-506-472-3215 or by mail at 17 DeWitt Acres, Fredericton NB E3A 6S3 and I can send them all the information including recruiting posters for display.

Your assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated

Fred LeBlanc CD President

**In the Service of Peace and for our Veterans**

**Reminder.** The Blue Helmets monthly breakfast is held every third Friday of the month, for additional information please contact me as listed in the NOTICE above.