

# The Royal Canadian Dragoons Association

## Atlantic Chapter



Vol 25 Issue 1

FALL NEWSLETTER

Late Fall 2011



### MESSAGE From the PRESIDENT



#### GREETINGS TO ALL

THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS ASSOCIATION  
**ATLANTIC CHAPTER**

I PRESENTLY "RESIDE" IN A TENT IN CAMP DADAAB, KENYA AND SOMALIA BORDER. WORKING FOR UNHCR (WFP) AS THE OPERATIONS OFFICER. ON REQUEST OF THE HEAD OF THE DADAAB AREA, I SPEND MOST OF MY DAYS TRYING TO SOLVE PROBLEMS IN THEIR PROCUREMENT, SUPPLY AND TRANSPORT SECTIONS. SOME ARE EASY, SOME ARE QUITE CHALLENGING, BUT ALL IN ALL, I AM MAKING SOME "HEADWAY". ALL THE DAYS RUN INTO EACH OTHER, GET UP EXHAUSTED DUE TO 40C HEAT, WASH OUT OF A BUCKET, GRAB A QUICK BITE, AND FACE THE SAME HOT, DUSTY "BLAST-FURNACE" WIND AND PROCEED TO SOMALIA BORDER, TO PICK UP 400 + REFUGEES. THEN RUN THE GAUNTLET OF BANDITS, WARLORDS AND THE EVER PRESENT AL-SHABAAB, TO GET THEM BACK TO THE REFUGEE CAMP. LOST A DRIVER AND VEHICLE THE OTHER DAY, KIDNAPPED BY THE AL-SHABAAB, STILL NO WORD ON THE POOR CHAP'S FAITH. THEN A COUPLE OF WEEKS LATER, THE SAME FATE BEFELL 2 LADIES FROM MSF. THE SCARY PART ABOUT THAT INCIDENT IS THAT IT HAPPENED INSIDE ONE OF OUR CAMPS. THINGS ARE DEFINITELY "HEATING UP" HERE, A RATHER PISSED-OFF KENYAN ARMED FORCES HAVE JUST CROSSED THE SOMALIA BORDER AND ARE IN HOT PURSUIT OF AL-SHABAAB. THE LOCALS CALL ME "MUZUNGU", I THOUGHT IT WAS CUTE UNTILL I FOUND OUT IT MEANT "HONKEY". SEE YOU IN MID NOV.

ONE OF THE SADDEST MOMENTS OF MY TOUR WAS UPON RECEIVING THE NEWS OF THE PASSING OF BUSHY BENNETT. NOTWITHSTANDING THAT THE CORP LOST ONE OF ITS "OLD SOLDIERS", AND HIS FAMILY A GREAT FATHER - WHAT SADDENED ME THE MOST WAS THAT I NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO SAY "GOOD-BUY" TO A LOYAL AND LONG-TIME FRIEND. HE WILL BE GREATLY MISSED. BEST REGARDS TO ALL. DORAN.

### "On Radio Silence"

Due to some unpredictable circumstances "The Messages" from our country wide Associations and Regt'l Leadership is not available at the time of publication.

In review of the year thus far we have from the "Director of Armour" Col. M. Nixon, in as many words on the Regular Force Structure, to "Reload" itself following the Afgan mission. For The Corps, this means a reduction in the number of overall regular force sub-units, but also an increase in the manning levels of the Squadrons that remain. The Force 2013 will see an Armour Corps of 3 Tank Squadrons and 7 Recce Squadrons, with the final numbers to be confirmed officially by the Army Council.

The Regiment is fully back in Petawawa, and will be Celebrating the 111<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Action of Leliefontein on November 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Thereafter it's back to the high tempo of training for the upcoming tasks in the year to come.

At The RCD Association Head Office, the Editor of "The Dragoon" decided to leave the position, which presented "The President" a short time frame to find a replacement. This was to no avail, and thus "The Dragoon" publication was delayed in its production and distribution, but it will eventually arrive at your door step in time for "Trick or Treat" or perhaps a bit later.

Here at the "Hart-of-all-the-Action", there is always some news of interest;

This summer at CFB Gagetown, we have a "New" slate of Commanding Officers and RSM's.

- **Base Gagetown, 3 ASG**, Col. Paul Rutherford and RSM (CWO) Claude Chouinard (ex Armour School RSM)
- **CTC**, Commander Col. Dave Corbould and RSM (CWO) Daniel Giroux.
- **Armour School**, Commandant LCol. James Malejczuk and RSM (CWO) Walter Laughlin.
- **"C" Sqn RCD**, Officer Commanding Maj. Sean Pires and SSM (MWO) Jim Hebert.
- **Armour School** is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of November with an All Ranks Dinner and Dance, followed the next day by a Parade and a full Roll-Past of Tanks and Armour Vehicles. An excellent performance-

- **“C” Sqn RCD** is still part and parcel of 2 RCR Group, but it is expanding its horizons. Thus far they are still Recce Sqn., but plans are afoot to acquire some new Leopard Tanks. This Fall they are sending some 15 troopers for Tank Gunnery training and in January will see them do live firing here at Gagetown.
- **The Atlantic Chapter’s** activity is always “Stable” and predictable to some extent, but at the same time “Full of Surprises”, in order of precedence;

**Black Hat Luncheons** are always quiet successful, held on the last Thursday of each month at 1230 for 1300 hrs at Minglers in Oromocto.

**The Leeuwarden and Leliefontein Luncheon/Gathering** for the past 2 years has been combined with RCD personnel from C Sqn, Armour School and Base. Held within The Armour School hanger lines in K-38 Mans Canteen. This mix has achieved success in both the numbers of participants and functionality provided by the RCD School OPI’s. Normally held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April and 7<sup>th</sup> of Nov depending on the day of the week.

**The Regimental Birthday Luncheon** is still held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1230 for 1300 hrs at Minglers, and is very well attended.

- **Annual BBQ and Dance** held for the past two years at CFB Gagetown WO/Sgt’s Mess A-4. By all accounts and those who participated have only “**Good Things**” to say about the function. To this end, we have Booked all resources for the **Year 2012**, to be held on **SAT the 23<sup>rd</sup> of JUNE**. Our function will NOT interfere with The Association RV 2012 in Kingston Ont which is being held on Fri/Sat the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> of June.
- In the Category of “Surprises”, the Sec/Tres is away for 3 weeks, on his return he is informed that “The President” Mr. Doran Vienneau, has been abducted for three month to work as an Operations Officer for UNHCR on the Somalia/Kenyan border in Camp Dadaad, looking after /collecting refugees streaming from all parts in that sector, and trying to avoid the “Warlords” and al-Shabaad gangs, who have made their “Mandate” to capture UN personnel for ransom... We do hope he will avoid capture, but at the same time we have set up a “Collection-Bucket” in Minglers for the past two month, however thus far the Bucket has yielded only 3 IOU’s and .30 cents in Canadian Tire Money.
- Our members are always in “Motion” or committing their time to Community events. The “Snow-Birds” are packing up and the first “Batch” will depart on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Oct with multiple flocks fleeing each month until March, with April being “The Return” month. Others stay behind and contribute to their respective communities and projects. Red Hayes and his Wife have been recognized by The VAC for their worthy contribution of placement of “Crosses at Grave Sites” for the Fallen. Roger Acreman and his Wife Nancy are fully involved within the Fredericton community Clubs. Isobel Yeomans just returned from a War Memorial Tour of Europe, and CWO Marc Girard made it home safe and sound from Kabul Afghanistan.
- **The Secretary/Treasurer’s Report.**

**Membership:** Atlantic Chapters Statistics;

**Life:** 83. **Annual:** 60. = **Total of 143...**

**Member participation in Annual Functions;** Attended on Regular Basis – 41, Occasionally – 30, Never in the past three years – 72... **Correspondence;** In person, e-mail, phone, regular mail – 101, Never heard from in the past three years – 42... **Approx Age Categories;** 30 – 50 yrs = 12, 51 – 70 yrs = 100, 71+ = 31. This should give you some idea of our members spread in age, geographical locations and the commencement of diminishing numbers.

- **Annual Dues.** Attached to the END of this Newsletter, is the “**Cut-Off Send-In**” portion for the individual membership dues for the year 2012 @ \$ 20.00 each, due by the end of November 2011, or earlier. And you’re Generous “Donation” for which the Chapter is ever Grateful.

**Donations:** Atlantic Chapters operating budget is solely dependant on **YOUR** contribution to keep this “Chapters Communication” going, otherwise we will not be able to send out any “Post-Mail” Hard copy of annual updates for/to you. In that respect, I wish to “FORMALLY THANK” the following contributors who so generously supported our operations for the year 2011;

“C” Sqn RCD, 2 RCR, Mr. Cecil Barnes, John Correy, Alfred Dalton, Jake Flemming, Ernest Gannier, Herm Hirschfeld, Allen Hulberg, Ralph Jenkins, Banjo Johnson, Fran Kober, Eric Lusk, Vic Lockerbie, Leroy MacAdams, Ralph McAvity, Reg McMillan, Mrs. Marie Major, Mr. Ray Ward, Ken Maybee, George Meisner, Lawrence Mercer, Chuck Moreau, Don Murrin, David Purdy, Victor Rice, Freeman Shupe, Mrs. Barbara Urbanowsky, Mr. Doran Vienneau, Mrs. June Wilson.

**“THANK YOU SO VERY VERY MUCH”**

**Retirements:** Our past “C” Sqn RCD SSM, MWO Greg Preston, officially on 5 October 2011, and now resides in New Maryland NB. To the remainder who have in this past year retired, and the Names were NOT made available to me by “Print” time. To All “**Thank You**” for your “Dedication and Service” from all of us.

On the sadder side of things, numerous members, their spouses, children and relatives have been admitted to Hospitals for various reasons; most have recovered and are back with their respective Families. Some were not so fortunate.

**IN MEMORIAM – 2011.**

BGen A.E.C.(Ned) Amy, LGen Rene Gutneck, BGen George Watsford, Maj Jim Ayers, Maj Brian Hook, Capt(CWO) Gordon (Busher) Bennett, Mr Gus Ellison, Mr George Fudge, Mr Victor Lockerbie, Mr Ron Scott, and Mr Marvin Springer.....**Family;** Mrs Pat Davis (Mother), Mrs Barbara Russell (Mother), Mr Joe Fougere (Wife Karen). **“MAY THEY REST IN PEACE”**.

**Administration - Committee – Notes:**

This being our second year of operation under the new President and Secretary/Treasurer, plus one committee member-Matt Robichaud. Thus far we have managed to accomplish all of the Chapters requirements and functions without causing much upheaval to our membership or the National Association. **However**, time and age marches on, and therein lies the problem. I as the Atlantic Chapters representative sit on the Board of Directors at the National RCD Association for far too many years. I will be resigning my seat as of June 2012, at the RV meeting in Kingston Ont. Therefore, I am asking our membership for someone to step forward and assume this position to represent our Atlantic Region at the National Level, commencing as of June 2012.

Secondly, I have been your Secretary/Treasurer for the past two years, on commencement in Fall of 2009, I stated that it would be on a “Temporary-Basis” until a permanent volunteer would step forward and assume this position... Thus far no one has... Therefore, I will ask once more for “Someone” to assume the position of Secretary/Treasurer as of June 2012.... Otherwise it will become “Vacant”

**Tidbits from The Long Ago.**

**The Bizarre Journey of A Buffalo Head.** ( Submitted by Mr. Jack Rothenburg )

Many years ago, shortly after the Dragoons in Germany had received the initial issue of the Leopard 1A2 Tanks, the unit went to Bergen Hohne for its annual gun camp. That year’s gunnery training was undeniably more challenging than the typical previous gun camps had been. The reason being that the unit had worked feverishly throughout the preceding winter to acquaint themselves with their new tank, having to convert all training material from German to English in virtually only weeks, with the aim of becoming combat ready as quickly as possible and most importantly to be ready for the upcoming Canada Cup competition, the prize of all prizes for Canadian tankers.

Obviously the attitude within the Regiment was a no nonsense, hard work will overcome, approach to the task at hand. There was no time for tomfoolery or spur-of-the-moment exuberance.

None the less, a long standing commitment had the RSM and a group of his inimitable senior NCOs take a bus across the range to visit the senior NCOs mess of the 17/21<sup>st</sup> Lancers. Upon arrival at the Lancers mess many of the visiting RCD NCOs commented on the magnificent buffalo head which was dominating the mess entrance in superb grandeur. This outstanding example of taxidermy had earlier been presented to the 17/21<sup>st</sup> senior NCO mess by the senior NCOs of The Lord Strathcona's Horse.

After a grand evening of fellowship and a multitude of unique British bar games, it was time for the now very happy Canadian visitors to say farewell and wend their way back across the range.

Very early the next morning many of the RCD senior NCOs were shaken awake and given the shocking news that their RSM and TQ were being held incommunicado by a very perturbed RSM of the 17/21<sup>st</sup> Lancers. In total disbelief every able senior NCO rushed to their RSMs room to try to make some sense of the unbelievable news they had been given. Alas, instead of the RSM all they found, tucked under the blankets of his bed, was that outstanding example of taxidermy, the 17/21<sup>st</sup> Lancers Buffalo Head.

A hasty investigation determined that a group of 17/21<sup>st</sup> NCOs had been sent to the RCD lines to find and make off with anything comparable to their prized buffalo head. Unbelievably, the raiders were able to abscond with two of the Regiment's historic lances. This plunder was to be used to negotiate the return of the buffalo head and secure the release of the imprisoned RSM and TQ.

Eventually the exchange/return of everything and everyone was negotiated satisfactorily and all there was left to do was to determine how the buffalo head could have possibly made its way across the Hohne ranges and into the RSMs bed. Many stories have come to light regarding this incident but it seems that the following is the most plausible explanation.

Toward the end of the evening's activities, one RCD asked one 17/21<sup>st</sup> Lancer what would happen if their magnificent buffalo head were to "Roam-on-the-Range". The RCD was informed that such a thing was physically impossible as the buffalo head was very heavy, securely mounted and it would be ludicrous to imagine anyone walking off with it, in plain sight of all assembled.

It is said that the buffalo head was too large to fit into the bus used to transport the celebrants and IT back to their quarters, so IT completed the journey half in half out. Supposedly someone suggested burying the head at some hidden location somewhere in the centre of the range, but fortunately was eventually persuaded to forget it.

For a while a number of NCOs found themselves extremely involved with the activities at the firing points, therefore unable to spend any time in base camp. Good shooting quickly became the dominant topic of conversation once more and in due course the unit went on to win the coveted Canada Cup.

**>>The RCD RV 2012 will be held at the Ambassador Hotel, Kingston Ont. June 15 – 16 2012.**

1550 Princess St. Register Name "Dragoons RV 2012". Phone; 1-866-935-8764/1-888-808-1064.

<http://ambassador1-px.rtk.com/> Room Rates @ \$ 119 + Tax, upgrades available.

**Respectfully yours, Thomas Urbanowsky....Secretary/Treasurer.**

-----Cut Off-----Send In-----



**THE ROYAL CANADIAN DRAGOONS ASSOCIATION**

**ATLANTIC CHAPTER**

1. Membership Dues for the Year \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 20.00 per year, enclosed @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Chapter Member "Donation" .....@ \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
3. **Total Amount Enclosed**.....@ \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Cheque Payable to: RCD Association Atlantic Chapter

5. Name \_\_\_\_\_ . Date \_\_\_\_\_ . Signature \_\_\_\_\_ .

6. **Mail To:** RCD Association Atlantic Chapter, T.E.Urbanowsky, 1 Shephard Dr. Oromocto, NB. E2V 2M2

7. **Please Note any changes as to your address/phone/E-mail or status.**