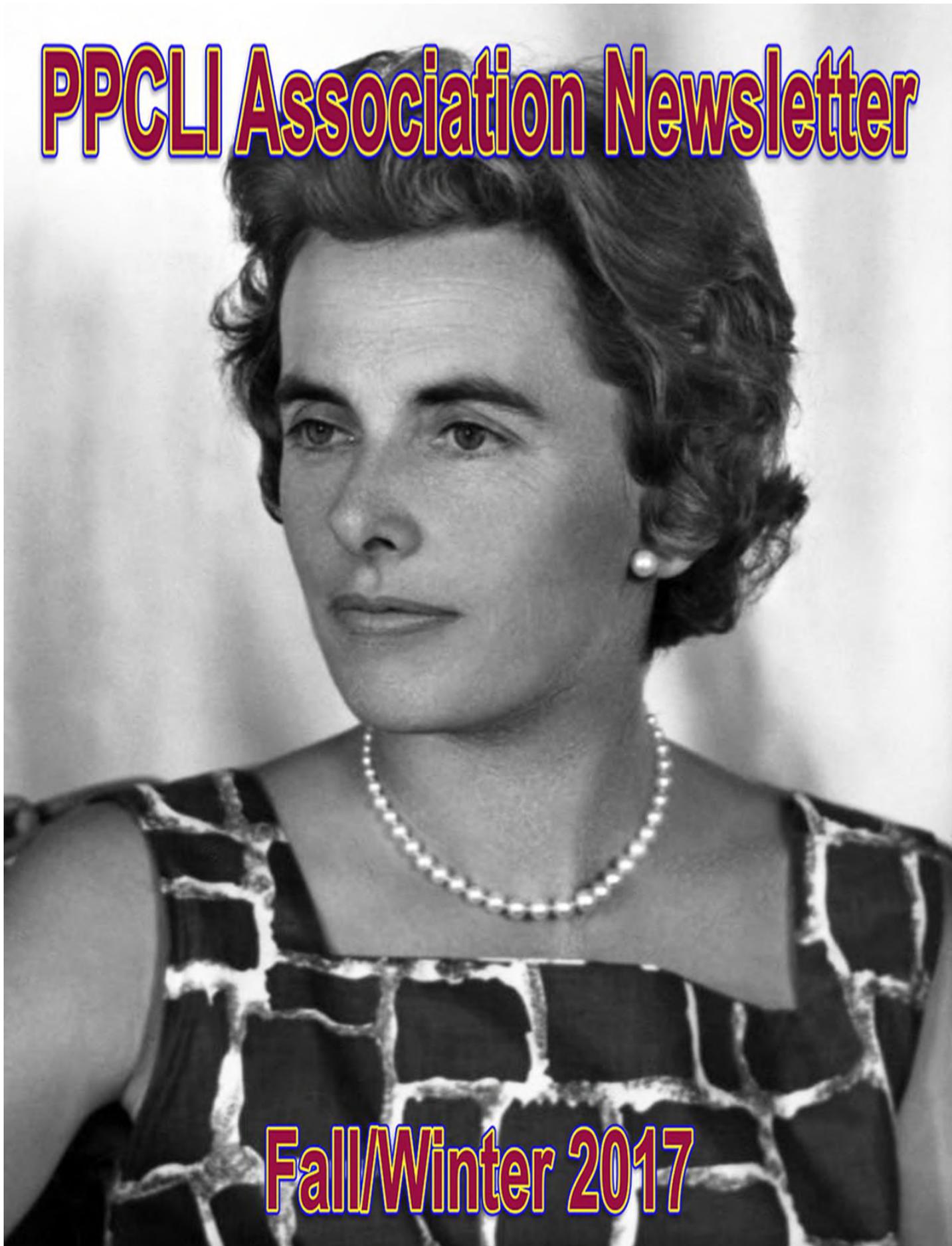


# PPCLI Association Newsletter



Fall/Winter 2017

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## **COLONEL-IN-CHIEF MESSAGE FOR THE PPCLI ASSOCIATION**

My Dear Patricias,

It is my pleasure to provide a greeting to all in your Fall 2017 Association Newsletter. It has been an active year for the Association. The Annual General Meeting organized by the South West Ontario Branch was extremely productive. We really focused on the Suicide Prevention Workshop on 10 June 2017. It was a remarkable event, well-planned, and very well executed. It shows that we are totally committed to preventing suicide among our members and our veterans. We must move forward quickly in our caring for the mental and physical well-being of medically released and retired members. The Mental Health and Suicide Awareness Workshop held at CFB Edmonton 24 to 26 October was the natural continuation of this project. It was well attended by Association, Serving and other interested parties. I was pleased to be advised that the RCR Association and Royal Canadian Legion participated in the Workshop, along with VETS Canada, Veterans Transition Network and Operational Stress Injury Social Support. Mental Health and Suicide Awareness are challenging issues that must be addressed. I strongly encourage you to become active participants in the Volunteer Patricia Program so that collectively we can help others in their path to becoming a Healthy Veteran.

A few months ago, we lost our beloved former Colonel-in-Chief, Lady Patricia, Countess Mountbatten. She was my predecessor and was incredibly kind to me and all members of the Regiment. There was a public ceremony at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge in London on June 27<sup>th</sup>. When I was unable to attend due to prior commitments in Canada, we were well represented as a Regiment by a Bearer Party from 2 PPCLI who were already in London for the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace; by Major-General Wayne Eyre; by the Colonel of the Regiment Major-General (retired) Brian Vernon; by Brigadier-General (retired) Matthew Overton; and by Paul Hale, President of the PPCLI Association. I was invited by the family to attend her private interment in the village of Mersham in Kent on June 28<sup>th</sup>. It was a very moving and warm experience to be among her family of six children and twenty-two grandchildren. I felt very privileged to give a personal remembrance about her to the whole village, including her family, in the beautiful parish church. I was very conscious of the fact that I was representing all of you, as members of the Regiment, as members of her family. She always thought of you as family and she was an extraordinary Colonel-in Chief. I have been advised by your President that the Association and other groups of Patricias gathered in thirteen locations across Canada in memory of Lady Patricia and her connection to the Regiment.

I am very impressed with the charitable activities of the Association and the Hamilton Gault Memorial Fund. To give just one example, this year \$17,000 in student bursaries was awarded to 11 individuals. I have been advised that the intent is to distribute \$21,000 in 2018. This is a remarkable goal and will further the education of numerous individuals. The leadership and support that the Association provides is inspiring and I know that it will continue.

Yours faithfully,

Adrienne Clarkson  
Colonel-in-Chief

## **COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT MESSAGE FOR THE PPCLI ASSOCIATION**

Fellow Patricias

The PPCLI Association can trace back its roots back to 1917 when PPCLI Service Clubs would meet on a regular basis to discuss the war, their wounds and how best to fit into the regular world again. The needs of soldiers have not changed since 1917. Soldiers today have higher expectations, than those in 1918, 1940s and the 1950s, they want results very quickly and still require assistance in their transition from a military culture to a civilian one. However, you must become part of the PPCLI Association so that we have a better understanding as to what you are looking for. Last year the Association agreed to provide a free three-year membership for soldiers releasing after 1 May 2016. Very few have taken advantage of this offer. I strongly encourage all releasing Patricias to take advantage of this generous offer.

The Association has been exceptional in supporting the Regiment. The provision of hat badges and PPCLI flashes to Cadet Corps is an excellent way to welcome youth to the Patricia family. At the same time, the Association's support to the Regimental Museum's Speakers Bureau with a \$10,00 donation at the 2017 Annual General Meeting, \$5,000 to the museum youth education program and its assistance in developing the ongoing Regimental Memorials Catalogue clearly demonstrates their dedication to preserving our history.

I am continually impressed with the leadership and commitment demonstrated by the Association and its fourteen Branches across Canada. It is time that Patricias who have retired or been released in the past ten years to become members of the Association.

Once a Patricia, Always a Patricia

MGen (Ret'd) W.B. Vernon, CD  
Colonel of the Regiment

## **President Report**

28 October 2017

The 69<sup>th</sup> PPCLI Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 10 June 2017. I was nominated and elected as National President for the Association. It is an honour to be your President. I would like to thank Mike Austdal for his dedicated and loyal service to the Association as President from 2015 to 2017.

At the AGM, I made a commitment to develop a five-year strategic plan for the Association. It will take time and effort to develop and coordinate this plan so that it is integrated with the serving component and the Foundation. Here is an overview of what I am considering.

First, Mental Health and Suicide Awareness or what I call the “Healthy Soldier - Healthy Veteran”. While serving, we had the advantage of active peer support, physical and mental fitness training, leaders who looked after their soldiers, a structured environment and access to a medical system. Those who have been released or retired have lost most of this. However, the Association can help them get some of it back. We can provide peer support, friendship, help with mental health, physical fitness and leadership. The Association facilitated a Suicide Awareness Workshop as part of our AGM on 10 June. That workshop was very successful and established a way ahead. At the end of the Suicide Awareness Workshop, a short meeting was held with the following groups: VETS Canada, Canadian Army Veteran Motorcycle Club, National Logistics Association, Canadian Military Intelligence Association, Royal Canadian Artillery Association, Royal Canadian Legion Operational Stress Injury Section and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). There is a desire to work together so that we can all help veterans.

Mental Health is an extremely complicated issue and I do not intend to create a new approach. Rather, we must partner with others and raise Mental Health awareness within the Association and retired military community. Our goal should be to do our best to locate and assist those who are not VAC clients, but need assistance. We must refer these individuals to the appropriate specialists and assist them in accessing treatment. In line with this, we conducted our first Mental Health and Suicide Awareness Workshop at CFB Edmonton from 24 to 26 October. There were 18 individuals on the Mental Health First Course for Veterans and 14 that participated in a separate workshop on how the Association and Branch Volunteer Patricia Program (VPP) Coordinators work with the Regimental Veterans Care cell. It was very productive and there is a separate article in the newsletter on this issue. We also require more VPP Coordinators at the Branch level so that we can react when required. The next Mental Health and Suicide Awareness Workshop will take place in Victoria, BC on 23 – 25 March 2018.

Second, we must commence a proactive membership recruiting drive to encourage released or retired Patricias to become members of the Association. It is my view that the Regiment is a life long commitment and it is only as strong as its members and we need everyone to become part of the solution. Specifically, we must target Warrant Officers, Captains and below who have been released or retired in the past 10 years. The Association can trace its roots back to 1917 and the needs of soldiers have not changed. They have high expectations, want results very quickly and still require assistance in their transition from a military culture to a civilian one. However, they must become part of the PPCLI Association so that we have a better understanding as to what they are looking for.

The Association provides a free three-year membership for soldiers releasing after 1 May 2016 and very few have taken advantage of this offer. I can understand the reluctance of those who served 25 or more years who want a break from the military and are afraid that they will be asked to help others. The PPCLI Association needs their leadership, experience and knowledge of the gaps so that we can help younger veterans. LGen (Ret'd) Walter Semianiw made it very clear during the AGM that from VETS Canada's perspective, medically released Combat Arms MCpls and below with less than 10 years of service are the group that needs the most help. Very few, if any of these individuals are joining the Association upon release despite the offer of a three-year free membership. Many of us know individuals who have released and not joined the Association. I ask everyone to reach out and encourage them to join.

Third, transition to a civilian career, is another area where I believe that Association members can help. There are many Patricias out there who are now well established in a second career. How many of you are willing to mentor or provide advice to a young soldier who is in the process of leaving the military? Just contact me and we will start putting together a network. Herb Kenny, President of the Edmonton Branch, has established a process where a volunteer will help releasing soldiers convert their military career into a resume. We need to build on this and put a plan in place where the Association can help with the transition. Once again, my request is that you get involved, help others so they will have a successful second career.

The fourth area is communications. The Association must develop a communication plan that reaches out to the serving community and released or retired members. The majority of serving soldiers and many released or retired soldiers simply have no idea what the Association does or how we help. For example, in 2017 the following funds were disbursed:

Student Bursaries	\$17,000.00
Regimental Museum	\$15,000.00
PPCLI Cadet Corps	\$ 9,989.83
Col Belcher Center Calgary	\$ 5,000.00
Kipness Center Edmonton	\$ 5,000.00
Soldier On	\$ 1,500.00
Memorial Maintenance and Patricia Park	<u>\$ 1,701.63</u>
Total	\$ 55,191.56

The PPCLI Association must evolve to the meet the needs and requirements of our current veterans and lay the foundation for the future. This cannot not be accomplished in isolation and everyone must realize that the PPCLI Association is only as strong as its membership. My commitment to you is to promote Mental Health and Suicide Awareness, increase membership, raise the profile of the PPCLI Association, help with the transition from military life to civilian, carry on with our charitable objectives and respond to your needs. We need more VPP Coordinators at the Branch level and we need recently released and retired members to join the PPCLI Association so that their voices can be heard.

Once A Patricia, Always A Patricia

Paul Hale  
President

## **The Voluntary Patricia Program (VPP)**

In simple terms, the VPP is about helping veterans and their families get the help they need. Although the program's focus is on PPCLI veterans and their families, we are happy to assist all veterans, and at the request of a unit or Regimental Headquarters (RHQ) we will assist members of the serving component and their families.

The first step is identifying someone who needs help. All of you reading this article have a role to play here. You all have your personal networks, so you are best placed to identify someone who needs help. If and when you do, you may act as a first point of contact, but you should also identify the individual, and the individual's need, to one of your Branch VPP Coordinators or the Association VPP Facilitator.

The role of the VPP Coordinator is to meet with the individual in need in order to determine the nature of the problem. This is achieved by listening to the individual and gathering as many facts as possible. If there is a local solution to the problem, then the VPP Coordinator may take action to assist the individual with the help of their branch. In most cases, the VPP Coordinator will provide the results of their initial screening to the VPP Facilitator who will share that information with the RHQ Regimental Veterans Care (RVC) cell. The VPP Facilitator and RVC work together to identify organizations or agencies that are best placed to provide the assistance required and then put those organizations/agencies in contact with the individual in need. Throughout, the local VPP Coordinator will be kept informed and act as the Association point of contact with the individual to monitor progress and lend moral support.

It is important to note that not everyone that needs help is willing to accept it. We are not in a position to force a solution on someone. If they refuse assistance, then we should continue to monitor and be prepared to help, when and if the individual decides to seek assistance, but that is the extent of our role.

Here are four recent cases to illustrate how VPP works:

Case 1. A member of the Association contacted the RVC to advise them of a former member of the Regiment was facing significant financial difficulties. RVC contacted the VPP Facilitator with the member's contact details. Given that there was no VPP Coordinator in the area, the VPP Facilitator contacted the perspective client to gather the relevant information. In this case the spouse of the member required a treatment program that was not covered under provincial health care and the client could not cover these costs, despite having resumed work to help make ends meet. Working through RVC, a meeting was arranged for the client with a Legion Services Officer who assisted the client in applying for a grant from the Support Our Troops Foundation. The proceeds from this grant, coupled with a grant from the Legion and a grant from the PPCLI Benevolent Fund, were paid directly to the health care provider to fund the required treatment program. Throughout, the Association remained the primary point of contact with the client.

Case 2. RVC was contacted by the daughter of a former member of the Regiment, indicating that the former member was suffering from PTSD and was having a hard time. The family had a long-term plan; however, the potential client was having difficulty preparing the property they currently owned for sale. The RVC contacted the VPP Facilitator who in turn contacted the local Branch President to do an initial investigation. A meeting was arranged through the family for the VPP Coordinator from that Branch to meet with the potential client and do a site visit. It was determined that there were ongoing renovations inside the house and that the outside of the property and adjacent out buildings needed cleanup and work. The local Branch offered to assist with the outside work and clean-up; however, that assistance was turned down. The family was notified. In the end, the former

member made their own arrangements for the property and has subsequently moved in accordance with the family's long-term plan.

Case 3. RVC contacted the VPP Facilitator seeking assistance in providing transportation to assist a recently retired member who had been in a serious car accident. The client required transportation to hospital on a weekly basis. This was arranged and provided by the local Branch.

Case 4. VETS Canada contacted RVC seeking assistance in finding a former Patricia with serious mental health issues that they were tracking, believed to be in the area of one of our Branches. RVC in turn contacted the VPP Facilitator seeking assistance. Details were passed to the local Branch, but the individual has not yet turned up.

What these four cases illustrate is the variety of issues that might arise and that not everyone wants to be helped. When they seek assistance, we have generally been successful in coordinating that assistance by working closely with RVC and other stakeholders. These cases also illustrate that not everyone we identify will seek or accept help.

VPP Coordinators are the lynchpin of VPP. We are trying to expand our network of VPP Coordinators; looking particularly for younger Balkan/Afghanistan veterans. The Association has a due diligence responsibility to ensure that our VPP Coordinators are properly vetted and have a minimum amount of training. If you would like to become a VPP Coordinator, contact your Branch Presidents. Branch Presidents are responsible for vetting the volunteer to ensure that they are of sound character and have the right temperament. Volunteers will be required to provide the Branch President with a copy of valid Criminal Records and Vulnerable Sector Checks. Once the Branch President is satisfied that the volunteer is suitable, they will nominate the individual to the VPP Facilitator and provide copies of the Volunteer Application and the Criminal Records and Vulnerable Sector Checks. Although this may appear to be a bureaucratic exercise, these measures are required to ensure that Association's liability insurance is extended to cover the individual in the exercise of sanctioned VPP activities.

Know someone in need of assistance? Please contact your Branch VPP Coordinator or the VPP Facilitator, Dave Pentney ([djpentney@yahoo.ca](mailto:djpentney@yahoo.ca)).



13 June 2017



THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE COUNTESS MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA,  
CBE, MSC, CD, JP, DL, (D.St.J)

Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry regrets to announce the death of the Countess Mountbatten of Burma, the second Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment. "Lady Patricia was the embodiment of the Regiment for many years, and she set a sterling example of selflessness and dedication" said the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, current Colonel-in-Chief of Princess Patricia's. "She was loved and respected by the soldiers of her Regiment, and she will be sorely missed."

Lady Patricia, as she was known across the Regiment, was closely involved with Princess Patricia's from the time of her appointment as Colonel-in-Chief in 1974. Born in London on 14 February 1924, she was christened Patricia Edwina Victoria Mountbatten. Following education in Malta, England and New York City, Lady Mountbatten entered the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1943 as a Signal Rating. After serving in Combined Operations bases in the UK, she was commissioned Third Officer (Cypher) in 1945 and served in Headquarters Supreme Allied Command, South East Asia.

Major-General (retired) Brian Vernon, the current Colonel of the Regiment of Princess Patricia's, met the Countess Mountbatten on many occasions. "Lady Patricia was of that generation whose experience of war, and understanding of public service, was universal. I think those early experiences deeply impacted her, and she carried the imprint of those days throughout the rest of her life" he noted.

In October 1946, Lady Mountbatten married John Knatchbull, Seventh Baron Brabourne. Lord Brabourne was an officer of the Coldstream Guards and later became a renowned film and television producer whose notable productions included *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Death on the Nile*, *A Passage to India* and *Sink the Bismarck!*

Lord Brabourne died on 22 September 2005 at the age of 80. They had five sons and two daughters; Nicholas (an identical twin) was killed in a terrorist attack on 27 August 1979. They also had 22 grandchildren.

Lady Mountbatten was appointed Colonel-in-Chief of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) on 15 June 1974 following the death of Lady Patricia Ramsay (formerly Her Royal Highness Princess Patricia of Connaught). Lady Patricia Ramsay, the original Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment, was Godmother and cousin to Lady Mountbatten. Lady Mountbatten is also first cousin of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and is the Godmother of Prince Charles, Prince of Wales.

Upon the assassination of her father in 1979, Lady Patricia, as heir to his Earldom, became The Countess Mountbatten of Burma.

Lady Patricia was the Colonel-in-Chief of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry for almost 33 years and served with nine successive Colonels of the Regiment. Travelling from England, she has visited the Regiment on 45 separate occasions, visiting soldiers and their families at Canadian Forces bases and detachments across Canada including Gagetown, Ottawa, Petawawa, Winnipeg, Shilo, Edmonton, Calgary, Chilliwack, Victoria, Whitehorse and Yellowknife. Lady Patricia visited Patricia battalions serving on overseas operations with the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 15 times, encouraging soldiers and publicly recognizing the importance of their work. These visits took her to Cyprus, Germany, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.

"I first met Lady Patricia when she visited us in 2nd Battalion, while we were deployed in Cyprus with the UN in 1990" said Major-General Wayne Eyre, the Senior Serving Patricia. "I was struck by her charm and the easy way she engaged with our soldiers, chatting and exchanging jokes. Her legacy lives on in the Regiment and we love her for it."

Lady Patricia was also Colonel-in-Chief of The Loyal Edmonton Regiment (4 PPCLI) and supported the Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps affiliated with the PPCLI. She served as Patron of the PPCLI Association, and supported groups like the Pipes and Drums of the Edmonton Police Service, the Burma Star Association (a veterans group that promotes the history and well-being of the 7,000 Canadian soldiers, sailors and airmen who served in the Burma Campaign), and Countess Mountbatten's Own Legion of Frontiersmen (a private volunteer organization devoted to military excellence, public service, and citizenship).

Lady Patricia relinquished her appointment as Colonel-in-Chief of Princess Patricia's at a formal ceremony in Edmonton, Alberta on Saturday 17 March 2007. She was succeeded by The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, who serves as Colonel-in-Chief to this day. Lady Patricia's 33 years of service to the Regiment and Canada was formally recognized by Her Excellency Governor General Michaëlle Jean on 28 August 2007 when she was awarded the Meritorious Service Cross. Lady Patricia continued her relationship with the Regiment as the Honorary Patron of the PPCLI Association, an appointment she assumed at a ceremony in Calgary at the end of August 2007. In addition to her Regimental duties, Countess Mountbatten was a Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for the County of Kent, and was involved with over fifty charitable organizations around the world.

Soldiers from Second Battalion PPCLI, currently conducting Public Duties in London, England, will serve as the bearer party in Countess Mountbatten's funeral at the request of her family. The official funeral will be held in London on 27 June 2017 at 1500 London time, at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge.

## 2017 PPCLI Student Bursary Report

The Student Bursary selection board sat in Wainwright, AB on 27 July 2017. The board consisted of Michael Austdal, Director Bursaries, Jim Croll, Association Treasurer, Major Tony Ross, 3CDTC and MWO Kevin Littlejohn, CMTC.

There were 25 applicants, 11 were awarded bursaries for a total of \$17,000. This was the greatest number of applications to date and all of the candidates were well qualified. Three of the bursaries are awarded in the name of Association branches that donated money directly to the program. One was awarded in the name of the Association and the remainder in the name of well-known Patricias. \$17,000 is the largest cumulative amount awarded for bursaries and \$2,500 is the largest individual award to date. Our aim is to eventually reach \$25,000.

### Bursary Recipients



#### 1. Alissa Keer

Alissa comes from a second-generation military family, her father a retired Patricia. She was born and raised and still lives in Wainwright, AB. A previous winner of a bursary, she is entering her third year at the University of Alberta's Augustana Campus in Camrose where she is pursuing a Bachelor in Management. She was awarded the Calgary Branch Bursary for \$2500.



#### 2. Blake Peloquin

Blake's great grandfather enlisted in the PPCLI in Winnipeg in 1940. He will be entering his third year of Cellular, Anatomical, and Physiological Sciences at UBC. His goal is to achieve his Doctorate of Medicine in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He was awarded the SW Ontario Branch Bursary for \$2500.



#### 3. Tatiana Blackburn

Tatiana is the daughter of a retired Patricia (82-85). Her parents are currently serving as missionaries in Peru and are actively working to re-open an orphanage. She intends to pursue a degree in Theology (Social and Family Ministries) at the Heritage College & Seminary in Cambridge, ON. She has been awarded Lady Patricia Bursary for \$2000.



**4. Eleanor Van Gunst**

Eleanor's father having spent World War 2 in the Netherlands joined the PPCLI as a tribute to being liberated by the Canadian Military. Eleanor has been accepted and will pursue a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology degree at Yorkville University in Fredericton, New Brunswick. She was awarded the PPCLI Association Bursary for \$2000.



**5. Allison Anderson**

Allison is married to a member of the PPCLI and has decided to upgrade her education from being a Registered Nurse to pursue a Master's in Nursing at Queen's University. She has been awarded the Saskatchewan Branch Bursary for \$1500.



**6. Cherie Topham**

Cherie is a previous recipient of a PPCLI Student Bursary and is the daughter of a retired Patricia. Last year she completed a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology and has begun her Master's in Business Administration at the University of Miami. She has been awarded the Lt. Jack Munro Bursary for \$1500.



**7. Anya Maves**

Anya is the daughter of a retired Patricia. She is currently enrolled in Media Studies at the University of Vancouver. She has been awarded Major-General C.B. Ware Bursary for \$1,000.



### **8. Sean Rea**

Sean is the grandson of Bertrand Rea, a veteran of World War 2. He is completing his Grade 12 at the Dauphin Regional Comprehensive Secondary School and has been accepted into the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba. He hopes to become an Aerospace Engineer and help build the next generation of eco-friendly aircraft. He has been awarded LCol H.C. Buller, DSO Bursary for \$1,000.



### **9. Esmeralda Alfaro**

Esmeralda is the 2554 PPCLI (Calgary) RCACC Chief Warrant Officer. She has completed her High School and has enrolled in the Continuing Education and Open Studies program at the University of Calgary. Her ultimate educational goal is to become a Neurosurgeon. She was awarded the LCol F.D. Farquhar, DSO Bursary for \$1,000.



### **10. Kaitlyn Kokoska**

Kaitlyn is the daughter of a Retired Patricia (82-85) and partner of a serving Patricia serving with 3 PPCLI. She is entering her fifth and final year of a degree in Fine Arts, focusing in Creative and Professional Writing at the University of Victoria. She was awarded a Hamilton Gault Bursary for \$1,000.



### **11. Kristin Makulowich**

Kristen is the daughter of a retired PPCLI Officer. She is entering her final year in Nanotechnology Engineering at the University of Waterloo. She hopes to continue her education by entering a Master's program dedicated to clean energy technology. She has been awarded a Hamilton Gault Bursary for \$1,000.

Michael Austdal  
Director of Bursaries  
Past President  
PPCLI Association

## **Mental Health and Suicide Awareness**

In response to a tragic suicide in January 2016, the South West Ontario Branch of the PPCLI Association conducted a review of veterans' suicide prevention programs. The purpose was to determine the extent of the problem and to identify what the PPCLI Association could do to add its weight in suicide awareness. No one really knows how many released or retired military members have died by suicide over the past few years. Anecdotal comments have implied that we may have lost more soldiers to suicide than were killed during our deployments to Afghanistan. At the 2017 National Annual General Meeting, the Association decided that we would take a proactive approach to Mental Health and Suicide Awareness.

The first step is to build on the existing Volunteer Patricia Program (VPP) so that we can assist released and retired members. It was decided that we would conduct a series of workshops consisting to a two-day Mental Health First Aid Course for veterans and one day on how VPP Coordinators work with the Regimental Veterans Care (RVC) Cell. The first workshop was successfully conducted at CFB Edmonton from 24 to 26 October. There were 18 individuals on the Mental Health First Aid Course and 14 participated, including two Royals, in the RVC workshop. This was the critical portion of the workshop. WO Jon Feltham and Sgt Blake Dunphy covered their responsibilities as it related to serving members and how the RVC helps retired or released veterans. There were a series of presentations by:

- Service Income Security Insurance Plan Financial Services
- Operational Stress Injury Support Service
- Alberta Health Service Operational Stress Injury Clinic
- Veteran's Transition Network
- VETS Canada

Each of these agencies talked about the services they offer and how they can assist Branch VPP Coordinators. All the presentations were well done. The two comments that personally struck me were: first by the SISIP rep who explained that 31 of her clients had died by suicide during her 20 years as a financial advisor; second was Debbie Lowther from VETS Canada who explained that the group in the most need of help are Combat Arms Sgts and below with less than 10 years' service and medically released.

WO Feltham and Sgt Dunphy concluded the day by discussing the issues that they deal with on a weekly basis. These are: Financial problems, Attempted Suicides, Homelessness and Transition. These went longer than anticipated and provided all with insights as to various ways of dealing with the issues. More time will have to be allocated to this area in future workshops.

The next workshop will be conducted in Victoria from 23 to 25 March 2018 and the third in Ontario in September/ October 2018. There is no cost to attend the workshop and the Association will subsidize attendance by members from outside the local area. We need more VPP coordinators so that we can share the workload and increase our capability to help veterans. I ask you to step forward and get involved in helping others.

## Branch Articles

### Atlantic Canada Branch

By Charles Owens

Our year in Atlantic Canada is starting to wind down, following another successful September Annual General Meeting from Aldershot N.S. Once again, we provide a team in the second Annual "Soldier On" golf game. Many thanks to the Association and Foundation for providing the funds for this worthwhile and very successful event.

Nothing in Eastern Canada can give you more pride and honor than to read the attributes our Nova Scotia Veteran, Roy Rushton. Hopefully you will enjoy reading the following condensed version of his life story. Roy is a veteran of World War Two and Korea.

His experience in France, Belgium and Holland during World War Two was of inestimable value to the officers and soldiers in D Company, 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry when it went into action in Korea in February 1951.

As background it is important to know something about Roy's World War Two service. He enlisted at age 21 in 1939 and served in an infantry unit. In 1942 Canada sought volunteers to take airborne training for the First Canadian Parachute Battalion, which later became part of the 3rd Parachute Brigade of the British 6th Airborne Division.



1 Can Para -shoulder patch

The Canadian battalion was of the first units to jump behind enemy lines on June 5, 1944, several hours ahead of the Normandy landings on D-Day. Roy was carried to the drop zone aboard a British Alembert aircraft. The drop was made through a bottom hatch, not a side door departure as on other aircraft. The night air was being smashed about by flak and enemy planes had attacked the armada and many planes were off course. The troops dropped in many locations and their formations were scattered.

Roy was wounded, and the Protestant chaplain was killed when his parachute failed to open. The Germans counterattacked and the paratroopers had no heavy support weapons. Over the next two months 1 Can Para would lose well over 300 soldiers, roughly half of those who had dropped into France. They returned to England to regroup and get reinforced. Replacements were very hard to come by as the soldiers had to be qualified parachutists.



### The drop across the Rhine

On Christmas Day they were deployed to the Ardennes forest area in Belgium to help stem the enemy offensive in the Battle of the Bulge. They were the only Canadian soldiers to serve in the Battle. Later they would jump again in March 1945, this time into Holland to join in the Rhine offensive. Roy was wounded in the thigh and he carried the shrapnel with him even when he sailed for Korea in November 1950



Roy Rushton, with his Enfield sniper's rifle in Holland, January 1945

In August 1950, Roy re-enlisted into the Canadian Army along with many other World War Two veterans from Nova Scotia. He was promoted to corporal, putting him in command of an infantry section. He put young recruits through their training in Canada, and after they landed in Korea three months later, he trained them some more behind the lines in Mariang, near Pusan. They all gained tremendous benefit from Roy's knowledge and instincts from serving under fire on three separate fronts during his previous service.

In 2015, Roy received France's Legion of Honor for his role in the 1944 Normandy campaign action. The award was made to surviving veterans of the D-Day landings, and of course, those who jumped behind enemy lines as a prelude to the landings. To read the entire story please contact me at [2ppcli15@gmail.com](mailto:2ppcli15@gmail.com).



Roy and Margaret Rushton

### **Kingston Branch**

2017 has been another steady year for the Kingston Branch. Once again, we had a great turn-out, 40, at our Regimental Day Dinner at the Captain Matthew J Dawe Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion which again was apropos to our regimental ethos and the tone of the Regimental Day gathering at hand. A great night of fellowship and camaraderie, we were treated to an interesting display and dissertation of WW1 Patricia artifacts by our local militaria collector and historian, Lou Grimshaw.

The first inaugural Kingston Branch PPCLI Association Golf tournament was held at Glen Lawrence Golf Course in May. Superbly organized by John Hooyer and attended by 16 hardy golfers (and hackers), a great time was had by all who requested this to become an annual event.

Along with the rest of our regimental family across Canada and overseas, the Kingston Branch commemorated the passing of our second Colonel in Chief with a ceremony at the Fort Frontenac Officers Mess. With opening remarks by the Branch President, Marv Makulowich, the senior serving Patricia, Lieutenant Col Sean Hackett, and our local Patricia padre, Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Peter Bartlett, the floor was then opened to many heart-warming reminiscences of encounters with Lady Patricia. Few dry eyes were to be seen that afternoon with the passing of an era.

Planned activities for the fall include a one day of clean-up on the Highway of Heroes and then our Christmas dinner. How many people can you identify in the following photographs?



Regt Day Dinner 2017 Kingston





## SW Ontario Branch

By Phil Cook, President SW Ontario PPCLI Veterans Association

“First in the Field” Greetings to all PPCLI Veterans and your families, all other Veterans that served with the PPCLI and their families and to our brothers, sisters and families still serving the Regiment whether in Canada or abroad.

Our SW Ontario Branch Nominal Role now numbers 113 and with such a large piece of terrain - stretching across South Western Ontario from Windsor through Niagara and Toronto to Oshawa then North to North Eastern Ontario - our goal is to further reach out to as many of our Veterans as possible.

Our records show that our Veterans are scattered across SW Ontario - and beyond - making it a challenge to maintain direct communication and to bring our Veterans together for events or to provide support to them through the various programs in place and under development. We are looking at various ways to accomplish this mission and will keep you posted on our initiatives.

We were most saddened on the news of the passing of Lady Patricia Brabourne. Our members held a Celebration of Life in both St. Catharines and London where many took the opportunity to come together and to share their experiences with Lady Patricia, celebrate and honour her service to the Regiment and to the Association. In St. Catharines, John Hunter was asked to speak about Lady Patricia, which he eloquently did speaking of her sense of duty to the Regiment, and how that sense is embodied in the Regiment. We shall not forget her.

### Invictus Games



Many of our SW Ontario PPCLI Veterans attended the Invictus Games to support all Veterans, but most importantly to give Regimental Brotherhood support to our own. There were several PPCLI Veteran athletes at the Games. One of our members, Chris Klodt was a particulate in the Invictus Games in his favorite sport - wheelchair rugby.

### National AGM – Niagara-on-the-Lake

The Branch highlight of the year was hosting the 2017 National AGM in Niagara-on-the-Lake and the attendance of our Colonel-in-Chief, Madame Clarkson. We thank all who attended the event and enjoyed the wine tours, visiting the local area, the dining in and, of course, the AGM. It was at this meeting that Paul Hale, our Past President, was confirmed as National President. We all wish him luck and success in the years ahead.



Kim and Kevin Nanson from Edmonton



Steve Bartlett in the background while Henry Klausniter, Kevin and Kim Mead enjoy their wine tasting



Romeo Daley and Hub Lalonde with the Korean Ambassador at the Burlington Korea War Naval Veterans Ceremony.



Our Veterans and their spouses celebrated Regimental Day in Niagara and in London with lunch and dinner gatherings



August BBQ - Regimental Birthday and Veterans of Foreign Conflicts  
Thanks to George and Barb Ledwon we commemorated our Veterans and their spouses service in style with a BBQ at their cottage on the shores of Lake Erie.

September Beer Call – WWII San Fortunato and The Balkans Executive Branch Meeting and Beer Call was held at the Imperial War Veterans Club in St. Catharines.

October Beer Call – Hamilton and Area



Much thanks to Doug Furchner. Pictured Derrick “Maddawg” McClinchey - CAV National Vice President (Canadian Army Veterans Motorcycle Unit), Greg Ferguson and Derrick’s tribute on his motorcycle to the PPCLI – fantastic.



In December we will commemorate our SW Ontario PPCLI Afghanistan Veterans with a beer call In Acton.

## **Saskatchewan Branch**

by Raymond Moskowec.

"Small is mighty", that is the motto of the Saskatchewan Branch. Since rising from near extinction in 2013, the Branch has grown to 20 paid up members, with 4-5 Patricia's pledging to join for 2018. The Province is large in area and small in population, so the task of inspiring the many retired Patricias living in the Province is great but not impossible. Our Branch is continually reinforcing the goals of the Association to all within the Province.

Some of the events held within the past year are: the meeting and celebration of the Regimental Birthday with the Brigade Sniper's Course held annually in CFB DUNDURN-July to September. The gathering of young soldiers (candidates and Staff from the 3 Battalions) and the old soldiers from the Branch, provides for great comradeship, imbibing in spirits, telling of war stories, raffles, drumming and singing competitions and just plain old good fun, is what the Regiment family is all about. Of course, the ceremonial part of celebrating our Regiments Birthday with toasts to the Colonel-in-Chief, the Regiment and the fallen holds precedence over the fun stuff and is well received. Other major events were the hosting of a memorial for Lady Patricia Brabourne on her passing last summer It was held in Saskatoon with many Patricias attending (the Branch had 4 new members sign up) and many more attended in respect. Many were surprised to discover that there is an active Branch in Saskatchewan; and finally, there have been 2-3 "Beer Call/Meetings" to date.

The Branch continues to support the PPCLI Estevan Cadet Corps in South Eastern Saskatchewan with visits by the President & Vice President (he is from that area) for "Dedication of the Soldier Tree" and "Vimy Celebration", communicating with the Corps for moral support and showing that there is a Branch ready and willing to assist in any way possible. Further, the support of the Cadet Corps also maintains a key relationship with 2nd Battalion who support that Corps from the Regular Force component.

As with any non-profit group, the task of fund-raising is interesting (it is felt that the word interesting is better than difficult), how-ever, the Branch works at this task of fund-raising from dawn to dusk daily. The Branch is not well-off, how-ever, the Branch is holding it's own. Last year, the Branch set a goal to raise \$2,500.00 dollars. \$1,500 for Student Bursaries and \$1,000 for the cadets. The Branch raised about \$2,000 dollars and donated to \$1,500 as the Saskatchewan Student Bursary award. The balance was set aside for next year's fundraising. Talking about fund-raising, the Saskatchewan Branch signed a Memorandum of Agreement with VALUE VILLAGE under their FUNDRIVE Program last March, whereas, the Branch collects takes donations of soft goods (clothes, etc.) and hard goods (books, DVDs lamps, etc.) to Value Village and receives monetary payment for those goods. To date, we have raised about \$1,000 dollars. We have also ASSISTED 4 veterans, 2 were homeless and the other 2 were in the low-income bracket, with furniture, dishes, many items to outfit a small home, disability assist items and such. It is very labour intensive, but the results are wonderful.

The future looks bright for Saskatchewan with continued recruiting, fund-raising, participation in the Suicide Awareness Initiative, support to Cadets and Youth, keeping the Regimental name alive and preparing for the 2020 AGM. The hard work by President, Ray Moskowec (1VP, 2VP); Vice President, Ivan Finstad (All VP Bns); Secretary-Treasurer, Darcy Parker (2 VP); Director, Jerry Heit (1 VP); Director, Julien McNulty (2 VP) and 15 members and spouses, of Sask. Br. continues to carry on the name of our great Regiment.

GO PATRICIAS!

## **Edmonton Branch**

Another year has passed us by here in Edmonton. The winter was cold but spring and summer were improvements over past years. This allowed our members to move about and attend more functions that the branch normally takes part in.

In February, several members traveled to Wainwright to socialize with fellow Patricia's. This event brought back great memories for all involved. The 17<sup>th</sup> March activities this year were celebrated at a local pub. Amazing turnout of Patricia's from the local area. This event enabled us to recruit a few more branch members. This year being the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vimy, we held a gathering at Patricia Park to say few words for those who gave their lives in this battle. May is usually our Frezenberg dinner which we did not have due to booking conflicts at our meeting facility so once again we gathered at Patricia Park to remember our fallen with a prayer and a toast. June was the AGM in Ontario and the last of our meetings of the summer, which enabled us to pass on all information from the AGM.

June was also the month that Lady Patricia passed away. Garrison units were doing their own ceremonies, so the Branch held our own on the 27<sup>th</sup> Jun as directed. The turnout was remarkable. With a parade time of 1900 hrs the weather was nasty. Hail and rain was upon us. At 1830 hrs it started to clear of and by 1850 hrs the sun shone over Patricia Park and the masses gathered. We are sure Lady Patricia made this happen. We had a great mixture of Association members, serving Patricia's and (Patricia's I have not yet captured). Shelly Ullery read the obituary and provided the music for Last Post, Lament and the Reveille. After all was complete we toasted Lady Patricia and shared fond memories of all the times we encountered her over our careers.

In July we again had members attend the 64<sup>th</sup> Korean Veterans parade in downtown Edmonton. As well this month a member of our branch, Art Brochu, completed a tour of Alberta, raising funds for the Make a Wish Foundation. It included visiting 56 cities and towns and covering 5,219 kms. Excellent job Art. August activities included the following: On the 10<sup>th</sup> we celebrated the 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Regiment again at Patricia Park. Then it was off to the PPCLI campout in the Camrose area. This is an annual event that John and Patricia DeMerchant plan and organize. To close out August we had a large group attend The French Grey Golf Tournament. Branch members also assisted the Foundation in running an event during the golf tournament.

We had the misfortune of attending too many celebrations of life for our members and their spouses this past year. We are once again in the planning stages for our two main events to close out 2017. Remembrance Day parade at Patricia Park on 11 November and our Christmas dinner on 9 December at the Kingsway Legion.

A reminder to all Patricia's in the Edmonton area and those passing through we hold our meetings at 1100 hrs on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month at the Kingsway Legion, 143 Ave 50 St Edmonton. Please check out PPCLI Association Alberta and Saskatchewan face book page for upcoming events in and around Edmonton.

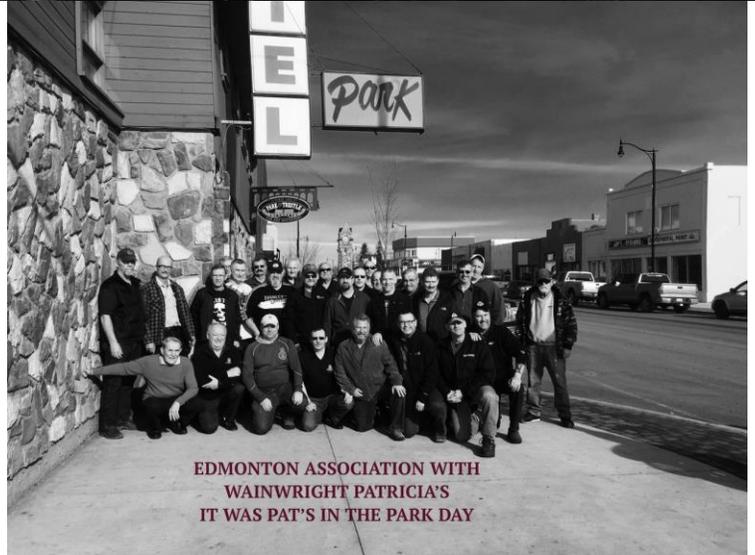
Once a Patricia Always a Patricia.

Herb Kenny

Edmonton Branch President



**MARCH 17 GATHERING CELTIC KNOT**



**EDMONTON ASSOCIATION WITH  
WAINWRIGHT PATRICIA'S  
IT WAS PAT'S IN THE PARK DAY**



**GATHERING AT PATRICIA PARK FOR THE PASSING OF  
LADY PATRICIA**



**PATRICIA PARK GATHERING FOR THE 100 ANNIVERSARY OF VIMY**



**ASSOCIATIONS MEMBERS SELING 50/50 TICKETS FOR PPLI FOUNDATION AT FRENCH GREY GOLF TOURNAMENT 2017**



## Cypress Hills Branch

Hello from southern Alberta. The big event here is getting ready to host the 2018 AGM. Planning and preparations are moving ahead. We still have to confirm some events for the weekend. That should be firmed up in the coming months. Just as a reminder the AGM is 25-26 May 2018. Registration will begin on the evening of 24 May. The registration information will be available NLT 1 March 2018.

Since the end of summer, we have adopted our winter routine, bimonthly meetings and the occasional get together. During the spring and summer, we got together for hockey and baseball games as well as our second annual camping weekend. The camping trip again this year was a great success. It was a good turnout and everyone had a good time.

We are looking forward to hosting the Association next spring. VP

## **Frazer Valley Branch**

Marc Gagne, Interim President

Hello from the Beautiful, Hot and sometimes Smoky Fraser Valley Branch.

This year our membership has endured sorrow and pain as we lost our Branch President, Mr. Matthew Ross Brown, on the 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017. Since our Branch did not have a Vice President, Mr. Marc Gagne, Past President, accepted the position of Interim President until an election in the fall. We now have a volunteer as President. As of 01 January 2018, Mr. Dennis Johnson will be the new president.

The normal March 17<sup>th</sup> Celebration was carried out on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2017 in the Branch # 280 Golden Legion at Vedder Crossing. An afternoon gathering of over 30 members enjoyed Regimental cake provided by Shirley Hensrud and Sandy Dehnke. Liz Brown provided her signature German potato salad along with sandwiches from the Ladies Auxiliary. Regimental music was played and the normal war stories were spread around the room. Members & guests had a very enjoyable afternoon.

During the summer break of June, July and August our Branch closed down to entertain our families during these summer months. Prior to the summer break we generally arrange for a BBQ at the home of one of our members. However, this year we decided to check out the local area restaurants. Our treasurer was very busy checking for a suitable location. She finally managed to reserve a room at IHOP in Chilliwack, just off the freeway. Again, the date was set for 03 June 2017 at 13:00 hours. The luncheon was well represented with 29 members attending. All enjoyed themselves and wish to engage in the same idea for 2018.

Ageing Gracefully: Like our predecessors, age shall take its toll on us in our later years. Our Branch, like any others, across Canada have individuals who have experienced mild to major ailments and treatments for whatever medical problems. Some have lost their battle with their medical condition, yet others have beaten the odds and are now walking proof of good Health. Here's wishing everybody Good Health!

Although the Fraser Valley Branch closed down during the summer months, the important correspondence from across Canada kept coming in; the best way to ensure everyone was on the same page was to redirect all this information to our membership through email. This worked very well and shortened our next meeting.

### **Executive List**

Interim President: Marc Gagne - until end of 2017.  
6437 Reid Rd Sardis, BC V2R 1T9.

Ph. # 604-858-3160 email: [marc.gagne@shaw.ca](mailto:marc.gagne@shaw.ca)

New President: Dennis Johnson - as of 01 Jan 2018  
#28-3555 Blue Jay St., Abbotsford, BC V2T 6N7

Ph.# H 604-557-7991 Cell 604-209-4955 email: [john@telus.net](mailto:john@telus.net)

Secretary: Sandy Dehnke 5793 Cambridge St, Chilliwack, BC. V2R 3C2  
Ph. # 604-858-0305 email: [sdehnke@me.com](mailto:sdehnke@me.com)

Treasurer: Liz Brown 9238 McNaught Rd. Chilliwack, BC. V2P 6E6  
Ph.# 604-798-3377 email: [lizenator@shaw.ca](mailto:lizenator@shaw.ca)

VPP Coordinator: Dennis Johnson

Vice President: We are hoping someone will volunteer before year's end!

Plans are underway for our annual PPCLI Association Fraser Valley Branch Christmas Dinner. It will be held on Thursday, 14 December 2017 from 11:30 to 16:00 hours at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 280 Vedder Golden, Chilliwack.

***Regimental Birthday***  
**Branch # 280 Golden Legion**



**Fraser Valley Branch Birthday Cake 2017**



**Doug Murray and Dixie Walton**



**Stanley Baird, 93 years young!**



**Walter Webster and Stanley Baird**



**Wes White**



**Walter Webster, (Hon/M) tending to the  
Regimental Music**



**Gloria Hartley, Bill Wilkinson, Erika Wilkinson**

## Victoria Branch

The Victoria Branch has had a busy Spring, Summer and Fall. On Saturday, 6 May 2017, we had a Presentation Ceremony at St Paul's Naval and Garrison Church. The Regiment has a long history with the Church dating back to the 1920's and several other plaques are already in place. The Church is celebrating it's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Victoria Branch of the PPCLI Association presented a plaque to the Church to commemorate the Colours of 1 PPCLI being laid up in the Church from 1959 until 1991. After the colours were moved to the Museum of the Regiments in Calgary there was little evidence in the Church that they had hung there for 32 years. With the financial support of both the National PPCLI Association and RHQ we corrected this. The Colour Officer for the Regimental Colour when they were laid up in 1959, Dick Macintosh, presented the plaque



Our Branch President, Dougal Salmon, attended the National AGM in Niagara on the Lake and was elected as the National Vice President.

On 27 June we held a farewell for Lady Patricia at the Pro Pats Legion on the Gorge. It was well attended with around 40 people. Branch member Larry Gollner, former Colonel of the Regiment, spoke about Lady Patricia and we all toasted her life, service and passing.

Recently many Branch Members attended the unveiling of the Afghanistan Memorial in downtown Victoria on 30 September. Larry Gollner from our Branch was on the organizing committee and was largely responsible for the successful ceremony. Jack Bates from our Branch was also on the organizing committee and helped with the event.

We will be holding our Branch AGM in February 2018. We will celebrate the Regimental Day at the 6 Mile Pub again on 17 March 2018. We had a great turnout of almost 60 last year and hope to match that again this year.

## Remembrance Day 2014

Former Patricia soldier and current Principal at Kinnikinnick Elementary, SD #46, Jeff Marshall, wrote this speech to be read at his school Remembrance Day ceremony in the small BC coastal community of Sechelt in 2014. It was a great speech and helped put some perspective of Remembrance Day in the hearts and minds of today's youth and us all.

### Remembrance Day Speech

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1983, Richard McKinnon, age 18, Private James MacDonald, age 19 and Private Ray Roberts, age 23, while on adventure training at the PPCLI Battle School were killed. They were in the back of a truck with 24 other soldiers when it rolled over. I attempted to save Richard McKinnon with the minimal training I'd been given, but he had already died. A week later, I stood at his funeral with some of my platoon mates, his family, and his high school friends. No one talked to us. In fact, I sensed a tension, and felt we were blamed for his death – to them, we were the army and the army had killed him. And 31 years later, I still think about the circumstances of those events, not daily any more, but regularly. I don't mean for that to sound melodramatic, but it's the truth. It was a defining moment in my life, the event that forced me from boyhood. And so, I remember ... not because I want to remember ... but because I can't forget. And that is the way it has been for Canadians for much of our history, for both those who've gone overseas and those at home. Today, few families are touched directly, by the loss of a relative in uniform. But after the First and Second World War, almost everybody was. And so, they assembled at cenotaphs - empty tombs - to remember their comrades, their friends and their loved ones.

Remembrance Day is about honouring the memory and the sacrifice that Canadians have made, and continue to make, in the service of our country. It is not about glorifying war and it is not about wishing that we have not had to respond in warlike ways. We understand that those who wear our uniform accept risks that might lead them to their deaths. Thus, we hold them in esteem knowing that once they commit to serve, they are in it until it is done, no-matter what "it" is. For them, there's no quitting when hunger or cold or fatigue make the next step seem impossible; there's no quitting when gripped by muscle-freezing fear and there's no quitting when all seems lost. And sometimes, all is lost, and yet, somehow, they manage to go on.

When we watch the tributes we sometimes flinch at their nationalism. We've been taught not to beat our chests and say that the deeds of our people are somehow better or braver or more honourable than the deeds of others. They are not. We are proud of the actions of our Canadian heroes and the history of our small nation's feats at arms. However, we Canadians need to remember, and we won't be stopped. During the Iraq War, the American government tried to block images of their war dead for fear of increasing public opposition; in contrast, we saw the ramp ceremony and return of every fallen Canadian. And in unplanned but spontaneous acts of love for the grieving families and respect for the dead, strangers stood by the thousands along the Highway of Heroes to bear witness and to share the pain.

But we must also remember that everyone suffers in war and while the decision to serve is voluntary in Canada, the decision to fight is rarely left to the victims: neither those who wear a uniform, nor those who don't.

And so, I ask, while you sit in your seats now, and when you stand in silence later, that you dwell on all that they have given to us.

Reflect, honour, and never forget.

## **The Vimy 100<sup>th</sup>: A Commemoration for All Canadians**

By Tony Anderson, MBE, CD, PPCLI.  
Ottawa, September 2017.

### Author's Note.

It was my privilege to have been selected to represent the PPCLI Association on the official Canadian delegation to the Vimy 100 commemoration ceremony in France. The criteria for selection was family connection to the battle: my grandfather and two great uncles, three Anderson brothers from Ottawa, all served at Vimy. They survived the war with only the loss of my great uncle's arm to shrapnel at Vimy. I thank Don Dalziel, Paul Hale, and others who worked behind the scenes, for their support for my nomination, as well as Don's invaluable assistance to me in learning of the role of my relatives in the battle. I commend Library and Archives Canada for the excellence of the open digital records of all WW1 veterans, Stephen Newman for his book on the PPCLI at Vimy, and the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa and Parks Canada at Vimy for so vividly interpreting the battle for Canadians. Finally, I thank and commend Veterans Affairs Canada for having hosted an excellent commemorative tour, and a tremendous Vimy 100 ceremony.

### Report.

There being no living veterans of the battle for Vimy Ridge, the Canadian Vimy 100 delegation put together by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) was a mixed group of some 150 retired representatives of Vimy regiments and of veterans organization, direct descendants of Vimy soldiers (ie, sons or daughters), a contingent of 21 young Canadians representing all elements of contemporary Canadian society, and representatives from the Senate and House of Commons. The delegation was actively led by The Honourable Kent Hehr, then Minister of Veterans Affairs, and superbly managed by the VAC team assisted by members of the Canadian Armed Forces. The care and attention which the VAC staff and their partners paid to the needs of the delegation members, and especially to older veterans, was remarkable.

The week's itinerary for the delegation included visits to a variety of cemeteries and memorials. During the visit to the French national cemetery at Notre-Dame de Lorette, we also visited the adjacent and recently opened Ring of Remembrance which records in a fabulous and compelling oval monument the names of almost 600,000 soldiers from some 40 nations on both sides of the conflict who fell in the Nord Pas de Calais region of France in WW1, including Canadians. The names are listed in alphabetical order without regard to nationality, gender or religion as a symbol of international reconciliation and "posthumous brotherhood". It was touching to see visitors from German, France, the Commonwealth and other countries finding the names of fallen family members which they marked with flags or notes of remembrance.



Tony Anderson examining the Ring of Remembrance

The delegation also visited several of the wonderfully maintained Commonwealth War Grave Commission cemeteries, such as Canadian Cemetery 2 at Vimy, where moving commemorations were held, often expertly led by the youth delegates. At each visit, we were struck by the many Canadian visitors traveling in organized tours or as individuals and families who were seeking a family grave or, surprisingly often, with no military or WW1 connections but who felt it was important to partake in the Vimy commemoration.

The Canadian headstones are all marked with a maple leaf, as opposed to the regimental cap badge of the fallen soldier as is the case with other Commonwealth countries. Some veterans among us expressed regret at this, but several of the youth delegates respectfully disagreed. Their view was that the sometimes scores of maple leaves that one sees immediately upon entering a Commonwealth cemetery has an instant impact on the average Canadian and foreign visitors who likely would not recognize the Canadian cap badges among the dozens of others. The iconic maple leaf makes the Canadian sacrifice so readily evident to all.



Students at Canadian Soldiers Graves

And then there is the Vimy Monument itself. I was seeing it for the first time, and by the criteria of both its siting (either approached from afar across the Douai Plain, or standing on its base overlooking the same plain as did Canadian soldiers 100 years ago) and its sentiment (mourning by a young nation for its dead, and soaring hope for a peaceful future) it is stunning and very Canadian. The outline of the memorial's white base and two sky-reaching pillars is now a Canadian icon commemorating the sacrifice of Canadians in the Great War. In a touching gesture, border agents used the Vimy pages in our passports for the visa stamps. The Memorial park hosts some 700,000 visitors every year.

The French were gracious hosts to the Vimy commemoration. The delegation attended the opening of the Canadian War Museum exhibition of wartime art at the Musee des Beaux Arts in Arras, followed by a military concert and sound and light show in the ancient Place des Heros. The villages and farms surrounding the Vimy Monument were festooned with Canadian flags. President Hollande addressed the ceremony and a fly past of French jet fighters closed the events.

The Vimy 100 National Commemoration Ceremony on 9 April was the highlight of the week. The ceremonies were an inspiring combination of military pageantry and music, acts of remembrance, songs and dances by Canadian artists, and speeches by the Governor General, Prime Minister Trudeau, President Hollande and the Prince of Wales. Princes William and Harry placed the ceremonial Boots of the Fallen. Many in the audience found the reading by actors of the actual letters between the soldiers at Vimy and their families and loved ones at home in Canada to be incredibly poignant. At the end of the ceremony, a US Marine Colonel and his wife remarked to us, "we do national commemorations in the US, but man, we have never experienced anything as moving as this!"

It has been well reported that the crowd of private citizens waited for many hours in the extraordinary heat before the ceremonies began. It was impressive how patient they were, and how their enthusiasm was clearly undiminished as the event got underway as witnessed by sustained cheering and applause for the performances and speeches. Following the ceremonies, as the official delegation made its way to the waiting VIP buses, visitors crowded the fence to shake hands with the regimental representatives with calls of "thank you for your service". It was clear that the some 25,000 Canadians came to commemorate the Battle of Vimy Ridge without worrying about whatever the early spring weather would bring, and they appeared to have been well satisfied.

Canadian indigenous peoples were well represented in the Vimy commemoration as befitting communities whose forefathers fought at Vimy. There were indigenous representatives in the delegation, including in the youth contingent, who led in parts of the various commemorations speaking in their respective languages. A team of indigenous spiritual leaders hosted a moving sunrise ceremony at the Vimy Memorial which was preceded by an information session on indigenous culture the evening before. As a side note, two New Zealand army officers attending the ceremony dressed in their British-style uniforms were wearing sashes with a Maori pattern. When questioned, the officers explained that all New Zealand army uniforms include indigenous motifs to highlight the integration of the Maori culture into military institutions.

The Patricias featured prominently in the commemoration. Our delegation included Association members Bob Dallison, Doug Furchner and Gerry Wharton who, while representing other regiments and organizations, were also readily identifiable as Patricias. We got together with the Colonel-in-Chief, the Colonel of the Regiment, and their aides on the several occasions when our itineraries crossed. Patricia colleagues who were visiting on a private basis included Barry Ashton, Charles Merredew, Bill Aikman and, likely, many

others. As a testament to the power of the Patricia tie, we identified Peter McLellan who served as the British exchange officer with 3PPCLI in the mid '70s because he was wearing his. Two serving Patricia soldiers who were on leave from an operational mission were with Peter at the ceremony because they also spotted his tie.



Bob Dallison laying a wreath at Menin Gate

During the visit to the Vimy trenches and tunnel, the delegation learned about the Patricia Crater and how the Patricias occupied the impressive Grange Tunnel which is still open to the public. Many graves of Patricias were found and honoured at both Vimy and at Tyn Cot Cemetery near Ypres. At the evening Ypres Menin Gate memorial service with a crowd of some thousands, I was honoured as a Canadian and a Patricia to be chosen to recite the Act of Remembrance, as was Bob Dallison for laying the wreath on behalf of Canadian veterans. At that ceremony, the Canadian delegation was standing directly across from the memorial panels which list the some 700 Patricias who died at Ypres with no known grave. This caused one senior veteran to remark to me, “My God your regiment bled in this war!” From the Patricia perspective, perhaps that says it all.

The experience of meeting many Canadians in France in April makes it clear that the Vimy 100 commemoration served different purposes for different Canadians whether in France or at home across Canada. In some cases, Vimy 100 motivated families to embark on a journey of discovery of the service or sacrifice of their forefathers, for others it provided a window into an important period of Canadian history, for some it was a discovery of Canadian military traditions and many simply stumbled across some element of the commemoration and learned something important about their country. Vimy 100 was truly a commemoration for all Canadians.

## **Lt. James Murdock Christie, MC, DCM – Regimental # 1576**



A few months ago, an observation was made on facebook with respect to the condition of the grave of Lt. James Murdock Christie, MC, DCM. Above is a photo of the grave and headstone. The grave is located on Salt Spring Island, BC and it is in good condition when you consider the humid climate. Romas Blekatis, a retired Patricia who lives on Salt Spring Island, has contacted the Anglican Diocese of BC to inquire about changing the headstone to a Commonwealth style and raising it to the proper height. This is a work in progress.

Lt. Christie, 1576 was an original who joined the Patricias in August 1914. His story of a grizzly bear mauling while in the Yukon made him a minor celebrity. In addition, his experience as a hunter and guide in the Canadian north made him one of the pioneering snipers for the Regiment.

Christie was 19 when he immigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1886. His family made their way to Manitoba and settled near Carman Manitoba where he farmed alongside his parents, Joseph and Ellen, until 1898 when he joined the Klondike Gold Rush.

While living in the Yukon, Christie spent his time prospecting in the summers and trapping in the winters. As well, he acted as a professional hunter and guide, becoming acquainted with many figures famous in Yukon lore such as Dominion surveyor Joseph Keele, journalist Agnes Deans Cameron, RNWMP Insp. Francis Fitzgerald, Const. Sam Carter and Bishop Isaac Stringer. Joseph Keele hired Christie as a guide for his 1907-08 Canadian Geological Survey expedition of the McKenzie Mountains between the Pelly and Mackenzie rivers. Keele named Mount Christie and Christie's Pass, which connects the Keele and Ross rivers, in honour of his guide.

Christie became famous when he was brutally mauled by a grizzly bear in the fall of 1909 and lived to tell the tale. Christie tracked a bear that had raided his hunting cache

near his camp 350 miles east of Dawson City. The grizzly attacked Christie who managed to fire two shots before sustaining horrific injuries. The bear succumbed to its wounds, but not before it had broken and dislocated Christie's jaw, torn his scalp, dislodged his eye, snapped his arm and bite his thigh.

Gravely injured, Christie, following the Rogue River, managed the seven-mile trek to his base camp. There, his trapping partner, George Crisfield, sent Christie to the Lansing trading post, a four-day, 50-mile journey via dog team. After a two-month recuperation, Christie made the 17-day snowshoe and toboggan trip to Dawson City for additional medical care. Doctors sent Christie to Victoria via stagecoach so that his jaw and arm could be reset, surgical procedures requiring a six-month hospital stay. Much to Christie's disappointment, the bear attack had a greater impact on his health than he expected. Consequently, he returned to Carman, where he worked in the civil service until the war's outbreak.

Scottish census records show Christie was born in Perthshire, Scotland, on 22 October 1867. The date is important as Christie did what any resolute enlistee would do when determined to serve his country: he lied about his age. In Christie's case, he shaved seven years off his age in order to meet the PPCLI's age limit of 40. When Christie enlisted in Winnipeg, his attestation papers reported his "apparent age" as a convenient 39 years and 10 months. Christie's occupation as a civil servant was also missing from the "trade or calling" section of his attestation papers. James M. Christie, "guide and hunter," had emerged from retirement.

Overseas, Christie quickly distinguished himself as the "first Patricia sniper." Col. Farquhar, organized a sniping unit under Lt. WG Colquhoun and Cpl. J M Christie. The newly formed unit recorded 17 kills on Jan. 25, 1915, in St. Eloi, Belgium, and the PPCLI's sniping section was born.

Christie became a respected sniper and instructor, known for honing his craft and maintaining careful technical notes. Maj. Hesketh-Prichard referenced his work in 1920 book "Sniping in France: Notes on the Scientific Training of Scouts, Observers, and Snipers." He believed Christie was the embodiment of the "hunter spirit," a trait necessary for the successful sniper. While his fellow soldiers boasted Christie never wasted a bullet and made hundreds of kills, he did not believe in celebrating numbers. In fact, the press had him on record as stating he never mentioned killing any men in reports he submitted.

On 22 April 1915, Christie was wounded for the first time. It was stated that Cpl. Christie "miraculously escaped death" during a battle where his pocket copy of the New Testament slowed a bullet, leaving him with a minor flesh wound.

In the fall, Christie's sniping and reconnoitering efforts earned him the Distinguished Conduct Medal, the second highest award for "gallantry in action."

**"7 October 1915"** A patrol of 8 snipers and 2 grenadiers under Sgt. Christie went out late this afternoon from our left Trench and made their way, crawling through the grass to the German side of the marsh, with a view to intercepting a German patrol believed to pass down the road from La Grenouillère to Curlu about 7 p.m. each evening.

Our patrol got safely to the German side of the marsh and concealed themselves 20 yards from the road. Just after dusk a strong German Patrol came down the road, (consisting of 30 men under an officer) marching in fours and with a flanking party in the marsh. Sgt. Christie seeing himself hopelessly outnumbered and in danger of being cut off between the two parties resorted to bluff and ordered the Germans to "Hands up".

The enemy not complying, our men opened rapid fire, the grenadiers at the same time throwing their bombs into the midst of the close mass of men in the road. The Germans threw themselves down and returned the fire of our men while the flanking party closed up. Our two right hand men faced around to meet them and one of our men killed a German who had come within a couple of yards of him. The enemy after throwing 2 or 3 bombs which did no damage began to crawl away, leaving several dead and some wounded men groaning in the road.

Fearing a return of the enemy with reinforcements from La Grenouillere, Sgt. Christie took the opportunity of withdrawing, his whole party returning to our lines without a casualty. Pte AGS Fleming did splendid work with his bombs, remaining behind with Sgt. Christie to cover the retreat of the remainder. (PPCLI War Diary, 7 October 1915)

Sgt. Christie suffered a gunshot wound to the chest on 16 July 1916. By then, he had been at the front for 19 months. Days later, he took furlough, returning to Winnipeg and Carman to visit friends and family. Sgt. Christie eventually returned to the front, not feeling optimistic about surviving the war. He was the last remaining sniper of the 18 first selected by Lt. Colquhoun; the others were dead, wounded or captured.

Lt-Col HW Niven described Christie as follows:

His long life alone in the mountains made him the most observant man I have ever known. He saw everything and said nothing. He could put his hand on the ground in no man's land and tell whether a man had walked there one hour ago, two hours ago, three hours ago. It was uncanny, and he was never wrong. He would lie out in the open behind our trenches, day after day and get his sight on some part of the enemy trench and wait for someone to put his head up. If he did not put it up today, he would be there tomorrow, and sure enough some German would come to that spot, and Christie would get him. This happened year after year. I have never known anyone outside an Indian who had the patience of Christie. He would concentrate hour after hour on one spot. No white man that I know of can concentrate for more than say, three hours on one spot. Christie could do it for two days.

Christie wandered over no man's land all night long, and he came back one morning saying that he thought a German patrol went past our front about 0200. He wanted four men to go out next night to scupper the lot. I rode into Headquarters and spoke to Gen Sir George Milne (afterward Chief of Imperial General Staff - 'Uncle George' to the PPCLI) who said he would come along about midnight.

About 0200 a hell of a row started away to our left front in no man's land. We could not fire and neither could the Germans as we both had patrols out. About 0330 Christie and his men came in and Uncle George questioned them.

Christie and his men had lain out in the open ground each with four grenades and his rifle. The German patrol, one officer and sixteen men came across where Christie thought they would. First, he shot the officer, each of his men threw two Mills bombs and finished them off with their rifles. Then Christie cut off their shoulder straps for identification and put them in a sand bag, and put all the officer's papers etc in. But Christie was in a state of consternation. He found that his patrol had pinched the German rifles and two of his men had left their own. Christie asked Sir George for permission to go out and get the rifles as he was responsible. The General's face was a study, but he gave permission and he awarded Christie an immediate DCM.

Christie was promoted to Lieutenant on 6 August 1917 and distinguished himself in the field at Passchendaele, earning the Military Cross. *“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during an attack. He made three separate journeys through intense artillery and machine gun barrage, bringing back valuable information. He also took part in hard fighting round the enemy strong points, and by his own initiative and resource accounted for several of the enemy. His courageous conduct was an inspiration to all and assisted materially in the success of the operation.”*

Discharged on 21 August 1918, Lt. Christie, 51, returned to Manitoba as "medically unfit". Newspapers reported Christie returned to Winnipeg and Carman to visit for "a season" while recovering from the effects of gas. Records show Christie worked as a miner in Jasper Park in 1922, but he could not resist the call of the north. Christie worked as a linesman on the Yukon Telegraph Trail before marrying and entering retired life on Salt Spring Island.

According to a great niece's blog, Christie married a spinster (Elizabeth Calder) who knitted socks for soldiers during the war. She allegedly left a note in one of the socks and maintained a correspondence with Christie until they married in 1933. On 1 June 1939, Lt. James Murdock Christie, MC, DCM, died after having lived a life as remarkable as anything heard in legends or seen in the movies.



Lt J.M. Christie, MC, DCM

Hopefully Christie's headstone will be replaced in the near future with a Commonwealth marker. A very appropriate recognition of his service as an "original" Patricia.

## **2483 Esquimalt PPCLI Royal Canadian Army Cadets**

The 2483 PPCLI Army Cadets have started off the 2017/18 training year with an explosion of 20 new recruits. Recently, the corps paraded 54 cadets - the last time the corps had 50+ cadets was in the 90s. The corps training year is in full-force with our senior NCOs recent participation in the Victoria Escape Room; 2483 broke the corporate leader board with a 38-minute completion time, destroying the former top teams record of 49 minutes. Ironically, the former top team was an Air Cadet squadron! Our band has also welcomed a new leader Mr. Bryn Badel. Bryn is an accomplished musician and vocalist and has received rave reviews from our cadets. The corps recently started a monthly running team, eight cadets participated in the first run and ran 5.6 km around the Macaulay Point area - the team's goal is to participate in the Times Colonist 10 km run in April 2018. On 20-22 October 2017, 2483 is heading off to the scenic Camp Thunderbird in Sooke, BC to complete a bush craft field training exercise. The remainder of the training year will be filled with classes, physical fitness, leadership, citizenship and most-of-all fun! 2483 continues to be very grateful for the support provided by the Vancouver Island and national PPCLI Associations. In 2017, 2483 was recognized as the top PPCLI Army Cadet Corps in Canada by the PPCLI Association.



**Senior NCOs at the Escape Room**



**Explosion of new recruits!**

## **3003 Battle River PPCLI Royal Canadian Army Cadets**

After moving the corps from Edgerton to Wainwright Training base just over 2 years ago, we have increased our cadet numbers, created a more robust partnership with the Wainwright base, and increased our affiliation with the currently serving members as well as the PPCLI association. Being on the Base in Wainwright has offered us many opportunities that we did not have in the past. Several them are: Access and utilization of the training areas, use of the SAT (Simulated Arms Training) range, use of the Rappel Tower and the base gymnasium. We also have a location on base that allows us to conduct proper training in Marksmanship and Biathlon.

In addition to the facilities that we now have access to, we also have several Regular Force Members that participate in the weekly and optional training of the cadets. These members have assisted with instruction, especially drill and deportment, and have become mentors of many of the cadets in the corps. 3003 BRACC has also been fortunate to have a

Regular Forces Liaison Officer that has become a valuable resource in assisting us in coordinating many of the activities and facilities on base.

3003 Battle River Army Cadets has also been fortunate in establishing a Sponsoring Committee that has taken much of the burden of the extracurricular fundraising off of the officers of the corps. This has afforded us the ability to focus more on the Cadet training. In addition to the relationships that our corps has been given by others; I cannot forget the strengthened affiliation with the PPCLI Association. Not only have they supplied the PPCLI cap badges and shoulder flashes, PPCLI Association members have been on parade to inaugurate the new cadets into the PPCLI family. Another fortunate aspect of having a close relationship with the local PPCLI Association is that we have members that are available to present on the history of the PPCLI to the Cadets of the Corps.

**A few highlights from 3003 Battle River Army Cadet Corps Training year 2016-2017.**



Sgt T. Dyck at the Provincial Biathlon Competition held in Canmore, AB



Capt E. Buerfeind, CO 3003 RCACC attesting OCdt S. Dyck.



PPCLI Cap Badges for 3003 RCACC cap badge ceremony



Mr. M. Austdal, Past President PPCLI Association presenting PPCLI cap badge to Cadet Culshaw.



LCol Tesselaar, CO 3 CDTC and CWO Halcro presenting Cpl Neufield a certificate for winning the SAT Range competition.



3003 RCACC experienced a day of rappelling.



3003 RCACC hosted a multi-corps winter FTX.



Due of the support provided by the PPCLI Association, Royal Canadian Legion Edgerton and Wainwright Branches, Garrison Support Base Wainwright and 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division Training Centre; 3003 Battle River Army Cadet Corps wishes to thank all the support and assistance that is provided to the Cadet Corps.

## 533 PPCLI Royal Canadian Army Cadets

### Creating a Culture of Service

Community Service is one of the goals of the Royal Canadian Army cadet program, and this has become an integral part of our culture at the 533 Sgt Tommy Prince MM Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps. We do our best to assist our community members when they request our participation or assistance.

Many of our activities revolve around honouring the memory of Sgt Tommy Prince; like our annual maintenance of the Sgt Tommy Prince Park, unveiling a new plaque to Sgt Tommy Prince at the Manitoba Legislative, and participating in the Aboriginal Veterans Day Pow Wow. We plan to expand our community service footprint this year assisting with the renaming of a local community centre to Sgt Tommy Prince Place.

For 6 of our cadets, the act of honouring our fallen Military members has become a deeply personal and integral act of their life after visiting the Vimy Ridge memorial in France this past May. The imprint will be a lasting one, and has spurred the cadets interest in local ceremonies. We have participated in local Vimy Ridge parades, the Brookside Cemetery Candlelight Vigil, Wreaths Across Canada, other local commemorations and, of course, Remembrance Day.

From participating in a Youth Gala in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, to local community clean-ups, and participating in providing Christmas Hampers, our cadets are learning the value of community service. In addition to their program requirements at the corps level, we have put an emphasis on completing the Duke of Edinburgh program to challenge the cadets to individually seek out and participate in community service activities, with our end goal of imprinting service to community as a way of life as they move into adulthood.



**From left to right: C/WO Klassen, C/MWO Ocadchy, C/WO Makarenko and C/WO Sackville.**

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Regt Adjt.....5453

Regt WO.....5452

Regt Veterans Care WO.....5546

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Regt Kit shop NCO.....5454

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## Last Post

Claude MCDONALD	February 20, 2017
Robin (Rob) LAMPHIER	March 05, 2017
Richard Stewart (Archie) MOORE	March 25, 2017
Nicholas STEVENS	March 27, 2017
Earnest David CLARK	March 30, 2017
Frank DOELL	April 06, 2017
Norman RAICHE	April 20, 2017
Frank Jack WATSON	April 23, 2017
Douglas D. (Irvine) JOHNSON	April 28, 2017
Tom RENTON	May 07, 2017
George (Wilky) WILKINSON	May 16, 2017
George Hebert	May 19, 2017
Orno Ernest (Ernie) YAHOLNITSY	May 20, 2107
Edward STOROZINSKI	June 06, 2017
Alfred John WITHEY	June 10, 2017
Robert William KOERSEN	June 26, 2017
William John "Jack" HILL	July 06, 2017
Prosper Clarence Joseph (Trapper) COURONNE	July 07, 2017
Alexander Malcolm SIM	July 09, 2017
Kenneth Charles EYRE	July 13, 2017
Richard Allan BARNHART	July 17, 2017
Graham TROTTER	July 22, 2017
Anthony Glenn ADHOFER	July 30, 2017
Oscar john Joseph LACOMBE	August 01, 2017
Horst Hans HOPPE	August 02, 2017
Robert William STEWART	August 05, 2017
Frank H. BUXTON	August 10, 2017
Leo BERTRAND	August 20, 2017
Hugh GRENKIE	August 21, 2017
Donald BARGER	August 26, 2017
Vince MacLEAN	August 29, 2017
Reginald Duane DITCHFIELD	September 10, 2017
Kenneth GAWTHORNE	September 13, 2017
William GUSCOTT	September 20, 2017
Adam Kevin WHITE	September 25, 2017
Kenneth A. BARRETT	October 3, 2017
Deon DURNFORD	October 6, 2017
Tom HOLLAND	October 17, 2017
Daniel S. DOUGLAS	October 20, 2017
David Cecil JONES	October 26, 2017
Ronald MAY	November 8, 2017
Robert MCROBERTS	November 8, 2017
Leonard REID	November 14, 2017