



**COLONEL-IN-CHIEF REGIMENTAL BIRTHDAY MESSAGE,
THURSDAY AUGUST 10, 2023**

My Dear Patricias,

I'm so happy that this year has really seen us return to normal as a Regiment!

For the first time in four years, I was able to attend the Change of Appointment in Edmonton between CWO E.M. Vollick, MMM, CD and CWO B.G. Worth, CD and the Change of Command between LCol C.M.G. Higgins, CD and LCol C.F. Petersen, MSM, CD. It was exhilarating to have a parade again, and to have guests and friends witness this very important moment in Regimental history.

I was also happy that we were able to do the transition from Brigadier-General (Retired) Vince Kennedy as Colonel of the Regiment to Brigadier-General (Retired) Ray Romses. Vince Kennedy has been a terrific CoR and guided us through COVID and all its problems with a steady and excellent good humour. I'm happy to welcome Ray Romses as CoR - a soldier of distinguished record and a great friend.

We have seen the IPPCLI return from Latvia and they will have a well-deserved rest before going into their fall training cycle. We will all have to prepare for an increased operational tempo in the Regiment. The war in Ukraine continues and we do not see any foreseeable resolution. Events around the world are pushing us. Patricias will have to continue their service perhaps in unexpected ways this next year.

We have all noticed the disastrous reality of climate change and its effect on our environment. I congratulate all of you who have put your shoulder to the wheel and helped with combatting the fires and floods which have preoccupied our news headlines and have seriously disrupted the lives of thousands of our fellow Canadians. I am happy that the training that we have as soldiers can be put to such good use in peacetime disaster.

And we have to be prepared for more to come. I'm sure I'm not the only one to believe that suddenly we are facing apocalyptic changes in our environment. Where I live in central Ontario, we have been getting smoke pollution on a regular basis from the wildfires in northwestern Quebec, and at my island cottage in Georgian Bay, the skies are often hazy in a disturbing manner. The air quality in Toronto, one day in July, was the worst in the world! None of us can rest easy as this is a global problem. We have been slow, as inhabitants of this earth, to take care of our environment and to recognize that the changes can happen very suddenly and cause hideous disasters.

Now in the summer of 2023, we see that West Africa has exploded as a trouble spot. I watch this very closely as I went there in 1973 when I was a journalist for the CBC and the first drought in the Sahel occurred. I spent three weeks in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso following the Red Cross as they distributed rice and emergency supplies to the starving goat herders and nomadic peoples of that wide swath of Africa. For me, this part of Africa was a revelation of mysterious beauty and intense human energy. The civilization of Mali - its extraordinary mud brick buildings, libraries and deep culture were fascinating. And Niger as a former French colony also was very intriguing with its population of many French people who had fled Indochina when the French lost there in the mid 50s. It was an extraordinary place and remains so to this day.

Canada has made an enormous effort over the last 40 years in aid to Africa. While I was Governor General, there was a great interest and priority given to African matters. For the last 50 years, Africa has been a critical part of our foreign policy. And as Canadians we could view our aid and interest as part of our duty as world citizens.

Unlike the British, France has always maintained a very strong military presence in all its former colonies and kept a hand in their governmental and economic affairs. They may no longer be colonies of France but France is still very implicated in these countries. Islamic insurgency is going to have an enormous effect on all of West Africa and help determine their geopolitical direction. We may be called upon to help in this very important part of the world.



I firmly believe that we must stand by Africa and help them to find democratic solutions to their economic and political problems. As Canadians, we should be prepared for political decisions that might be made there.

I hope that 2024, in which we will be celebrating our 110th anniversary, will bring us all together again. And at this time next year we will be able to get together to celebrate that.

I look forward to a year leading up to that anniversary and I am sure we will maintain our morale and be prepared for what is asked of us.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Adrienne Clarkson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adrienne Clarkson
Colonel-in-Chief
Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
