



**COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT
QUARTERLY UPDATE
MONDAY, 8 APRIL 2024**

INTRODUCTION

1. Wow, how the time flies by. We are now well into 2024 and not only are our Battalions fast moving towards participation on operations once again but the various celebrations and activities related to our 110th Anniversary will soon be occurring. My wife Carol and I hope that the winter period was not a great hardship for you or your families and that everyone is looking forward to Spring and Summer.
2. This quarterly update will go to the RHQ controlled Regimental Senate lists, serving, and retired. As in the past if you find other Senate members who do not get these updates, please get their contact details and notify RHQ at rhqppcli@forces.gc.ca .

POINTS OF REPORTAGE

3. **Broad issues at Defence.** The world security situation since my last report has not become any less threatening. Indeed, our rules-based system of order seems to be tested daily thereby placing our national prosperity at stake. Despite this in March the Government of Canada announced reductions in spending over the next five years which will have a significant impact on the DND and CAF. They will see spending reductions in 2024-25 of over \$800 million, in 2025-26 over \$850 million and in 2026-27 and after of over \$907 million. To achieve these reductions will no doubt be somewhat painful as at the same time we endeavor to deal with soldier economic stresses, build up our manpower numbers, endeavor to modernize, and also adapt to the changing character of war. This changing nature of war will also bring about additional costs which should be dealt with on a priority basis. These to name but a few. Note: As this Quarterly Update was about to be released the Government announced a defence policy entitled “Our North, Strong, and Free”. This apparently will include an additional \$8.1 Billion of new defence spending over the next five years. Positive news! Regardless, our serving Patricia’s and their families will be impacted greatly by all of these. We are fortunate to have such dedicated and capable men and women serving in our Regiment to confront and navigate through these challenges.

4. **The Regiment – Serving Component.** The following are of note:

- a. 1 PPCLI – For the Spring/Summer period, 1 PPCLI has stood up its elements for Op UNIFIER and Op UNION and will be focused on training members of the Task Force in preparation for June/July deployments to Europe in support of Ukraine’s ongoing war against Russia. This will include collective training by C Coy to generate the United



Kingdom Training Element (UKTE) providing entry-level training to Ukrainian recruits and A Coy to generate the Task Force for Op UNION, the CAF's provision of mobility and force protection support to Global Affairs Canada in Ukraine. The Rear Party will focus on preparing to host the 110th Birthday Celebrations in Edmonton with a world class Better 'Ole!

b. 2 PPCLI – Following their Easter/Spring Break the Battalion will next move into a short Primary Combat Function course cycle. This will be followed by Exercise KAPYONG HUNTER in May which will focus on getting both A and B Companies trained up to mechanized platoon live fire. After that B Coy will be reduced to minimum strength to free up personnel to augment the other companies. C Company will receive many of them as they will be commencing their pre-deployment training in earnest following summer leave in preparation for deployment to Latvia with the LdSH (RC) Battle Group in December.

c. 3 PPCLI – The Battalion participated in an Alaskan winter exercise in February and was embedded within a U.S. brigade with the U.S. 11th Airborne Division. They experienced weather which ranged from -50 to +7C. The whole exercise was Miles Gear enabled. This challenging and rewarding activity allowed the Battalion to become validated prior to their assumption of High Readiness duties as the Global Response High Readiness Unit which will commence this summer. 3VP's aim this spring is the conduct of IBTS that will include routine PCF courses and some focused individual medical training in preparation for assumption of high readiness.

d. Battalion Commanding Officer and RSM Change of Appointment Parades. Our Second and Third Battalions will be conducting Commanding Officer and RSM Change of Appointment parades this annual posting season (APS). The Second Battalion's will be on 26 June in Shilo and the Third Battalion's on 20 June in Edmonton. As advised in my 8 January update LCol Chelsea Braybrook and LCol Jason Hudson will become CO 2 & 3 PPCLI respectively and MWO Tobias Barter and MWO Kim Doerr will become RSM 2 & 3 PPCLI respectively (on promotion).

e. The 3rd Canadian Division Training Centre will also see a change of Commanding Officer this APS which will impact the PPCLI. LCol Bob Barker (PPCLI) will be handing over command to LCol John Hagemeyer (PPCLI) on 25 June. Congratulations are extended to LCol Hagemeyer on his upcoming appointment.

5. PPCLI Association. The Association continues to promote those bonds that Patricia's established as young trainees and fostered throughout their service. This is particularly apparent on those special dates in the Regimental Calendar. Every year social media is flooded with photos of Patricia's gathering on Regimental Day, be it a small gathering of 2 or 3 or larger more coordinated events. These events occurred again this past year from Coast to Coast to Coast and even overseas. The Association website, www.ppcliassn.ca, is a key location where you can find out what the Association is doing in your area, while at the same time, if you haven't already, take the opportunity to join the Association. Two key Association website initiatives that are in the planning stages are: to create an Events



Calendar where our serving and retired can find an event or activity to attend and hopefully reconnect with fellow Patricia's; and secondly, they are developing a website page to allow for Veteran run businesses to advertise their business or company so that we can support them. I encourage you to keep checking the Association Website especially in this 110th Anniversary Year for events across the country, celebrating and acknowledging the continuing legacy of the PPCLI.

Lastly, just a reminder that serving members who pay their Regimental Dues are eligible for FREE membership in the Association and upon completion of service, all Patricia's are eligible for 3 FREE years of membership with the Association. Remember our motto: Once a Patricia, Always a Patricia.

110 Km Bike/ Walk/ Run/ Swim Fundraising Initiative. In 2020 Greg Bell of the Ottawa Branch initiated a Bike Ride fundraising initiative for the HGMF. The goal was to raise \$50,000.00 by the Regiment's 110th Anniversary in 2024. Although over \$32,000 has been raised the goal of \$50,000 has not yet been reached. With this goal in mind the concept now has been broadened to allow participants to choose to ride, walk, swim, or undertake any physical activity of their choice to complete 110 km in total. The HGMF supports many initiatives to support our soldiers, their families and carry on the legacy and history of our Regiment. I encourage you to participate in this initiative to push this over the \$50,000 mark. I certainly am! It's simple – simply bike/ride/walk/run etc. 110 km and sponsor yourself or get others to sponsor you. The funds raised by participants are then to be donated to the HGMF. These donations, which will be tax deductible, may be made in a variety of ways. Sponsors can make an e-transfer to: cfo.hgmf@gmail.com (must include their name and address in the message section so that a charitable tax receipt can be mailed to them); or cheques can be mailed payable to the Hamilton Gault Memorial Fund – Hamilton Gault Memorial Fund, C/O The Military Museums, 4520 Crowchild Trail SW, Calgary, AB T2T 5J4; or by making an online credit card donation through Canada Helps at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/Hamilton-gault-memorial-fund/> (apply the donation to fund 1.a-110th Anniversary). Any questions should be sent to Greg Bell at: comms.ottawabr.ppcliassn@gmail.com .

6. Hamilton Gault Memorial Fund (HGMF). The HGMF continues to be active and has helped sponsor the Sydney Frost Battlefield Tour in Sicily and Italy which will occur from 16 to 31 May 2024. Three new Regimental Memorials will be dedicated during this tour to commemorate PPCLI action at Leonforte in Sicily, the Hitler Line and the Gothic Line.

The HGMF has also made a \$2,500 donation to the Canadian Airborne Forces Association in support of its Cyprus 2024 Commemoration. In support of the PPCLI's 110th Anniversary, the HGMF has agreed to fund the replacement of the 100th Anniversary Time Capsule, provide funding to the 110th PPCLI Art Show, and the Spouse's Oral History project.

The HGMF has allocated \$20,000 towards the 2024 Student Bursary program. Application details will be published in the next month.



7. **PPCLI Foundation.** The efforts to combine the HGFMF and Foundation are continuing. Regardless of the date by which they complete the necessary paperwork to combine the two charities and transfer funds to the HGFMF, they intend to formally recognize the change at a dinner in Edmonton during the 110th Anniversary celebrations.

8. **110th Anniversary Plans/Activities.** We are now almost into our 110th year as a Regiment and our various Anniversary activity dates are fast approaching. These include the following:

a. 16-31 May 2024. **PPCLI Sydney Frost Battlefield Tour of Sicily and Italy.** This Special Travel International tour will soon depart. Some 32 members of the Patricia family will be participating. The key events will include: a memorial service on 19 May at the 1st Canadian Division landing beaches in Sicily and presentation of a replica set of Sydney Frost's medals to the citizens of Ispica at the Carabinieri Museum; a 20 May dedication of a Regimental Memorial at Leonforte, where the first Bailey Bridge was constructed under enemy fire (this allowed the Regiment to reinforce the Loyal Edmonton Regiment who had been cut off by the Germans); a dedication service on 23 May of the Hitler Line Memorial on the 80th Anniversary of the battle (this was not only the worst day of WW II for the 1st Canadian Division which suffered close to 1,000 casualties but the Regiment started the battle with 324 men and by 1600 hours only 77 were left standing); a Memorial Service on 25 May with Villa Rogatti villagers to commemorate the Regiment's assault at that location on 6 December 1943; and on 28 May a dedication of the Gothic Line Memorial (on 31 August 1944 B Company successfully conducted a silent crossing on a 600 meter wide German minefield with only 3 minor casualties and went on to set conditions for the Regiment to breach the Gothic Line). Our thanks go out to Paul Hale for initiating this activity and his many efforts to ensure it is a success. Those participating will no doubt look forward to telling stories of their Battlefield Tour experiences during our other 110th Anniversary activities.

b. June through December 2024. **Inn on Officers Garden Boutique Hotel Display - Calgary.** A display of Regimental items will take place at this hotel which was once the PPCLI Home Station Officers Mess.

c. 19-22 June 2024 **Edmonton Events.** The key activities are as follows:

- (1) 1000 hrs Wednesday 19 June – 1PPCLI Building – Better 'Ole Grand Opening;
- (2) 1200 hrs Wednesday 19 June – 1PPCLI Building – Better 'Ole Lunch;
- (3) 1330 hrs Wednesday 19 June – 1PPCLI Building – PPCLI Regimental History Vol VI Book Launch;
- (4) 1600 hrs Wednesday 19 June – 1PPCLI Building – PPCLI Spouses Oral History Video Screening;
- (5) 1700 hrs Wednesday 19 June – 1PPCLI Building – Better 'Ole BBQ Dinner;
- (6) 1100 hrs Thursday 20 June – CFB Edmonton Parade Square – 3PPCLI CO Change of Command and RSM Change of Appointment Parade (Note – Drill Hall for inclement weather);



- (7) 1200 hrs Thursday 20 June – 1PPCLI Building – Better ‘Ole Lunch;
- (8) 1330 hrs Thursday 20 June – 1PPCLI Building – Countess Mountbatten Medal Collection Unveiling;
- (9) 1500 hrs Thursday 20 June – 1 PPCLI Building – 100th Anniversary Time Capsule Rededication;
- (10) 1700 hrs Thursday 20 June – 1PPCLI Building – Closing Remarks and Better ‘Ole BBQ Dinner; (note: the Better ‘Ole will close down at 2200 hrs);
- (11) 1800 hrs Thursday 20 June - Location TBC - HGMF/PPCLI Foundation Dinner (By Invitation);
- (12) 0800 hrs Friday 21 June – CFB Edmonton Golf Course – open golf for those interested;
- (13) 1230 hrs Friday 21 June – St Albert Inn & Suites – HGMF Annual General meeting;
- (14) 1800 hrs Friday 21 June – St Albert Inn & Suites – PPCLI Association Meet and Greet;
- (15) 0830 hrs Saturday 22 June – St Albert Inn & Suites – PPCLI Association Annual General Meeting; and
- (16) 1900 hrs Saturday 22 June – St Albert Inn & Suites – PPCLI Association Dinner.

d. 9-10 August 2024 – **Ottawa Branch PPCLI Association Events** are as follows:

- (1) 1830 hrs Friday 9 August 2024 - Regimental Commemorative Dinner – Royal Ottawa Golf Club;
- (2) 1100 hrs Saturday 10 August 2024 – those participating in a 110th Anniversary Charity Bike Ride organized by Greg Bell will conclude their ride and arrive at the Regimental Monument in Lansdowne at 1100 hrs; and
- (3) 1100 hrs Saturday 10 August 2024 – Commemorative Memorial Service at the Regimental Monument in Lansdowne followed by a pay-as-you go lunch in a nearby pub.

e. 3 October thru December 2024 - **PPCLI 110th Anniversary Art Exhibit**. This exhibit will take place in the Founders Gallery at the Calgary Military Museums from 3 October thru December 2024. An official opening reception will be held on Thursday 17 October with the Colonel-in-Chief in attendance. LCol (Ret’d) Bill Bewick will be the curator for this display and is well advanced with his preparations.

9. PPCLI Regimental History Volume VI. The final version of all aspects of Volume VI of our history (manuscript, photos, maps, introductory and annex material, jacket and cover) has now been copyedited and with a few very minor exceptions, is in the hands of the Author and publisher to complete the final steps of the publishing process. The Copyeditor did an excellent job in making the book more ‘readable’ and professional. The Regimental Editorial Board then finished a review of this version of Volume VI and, working closely with the Author, the milestone of having the book available for a book launch at the 110th Anniversary in Edmonton is achievable, barring any major setbacks.

10. The Patrician 2023. This publication is now available for purchase from the [Kit Shop](#) and will be available for downloading on the PPCLI website in the summer period.



11. **Possible Battle of Kap'young Monument - Banff.** Efforts and fundraising are underway by the Korea War Veterans Advocates of Canada, in partnership with the Banff Royal Canadian Legion Br. 26 to erect a "Korean War – Battle of Kap'young Victory Monument". This monument would be similar to the one erected in Airdrie, AB in July 2023.

12. **The Canadian Infantry Association.** This Association essentially became dormant as a result of COVID. LCol (Ret'd) Dr. Robin Hesler is working with representatives from across the country to re-establish it (including the three Colonels of the Regiment of our regular force Infantry Regiments). Details regarding the Association and its various Branches will soon be available on a website (www.infantryassociation.ca). The website is currently still under construction but should be open by May 2024. At that time, you are encouraged to review it and become members of the Association. Applications for memberships can be complete on the website. There is no cost to be a member.

13. **Wearing of Mess Dress (No 2) by Retirees.** The wearing of Mess Dress (No 2 or 2A) after release is now permitted. This has been promulgated in the latest Canadian Forces Dress Instructions. Former members are to wear the style of Mess Dress authorized by their Branch/Corps or Regiment at the time of their release (including their rank, decorations, skill insignia which they were entitled to). To distinguish retired members from serving members, retired members are to wear the distinctive CAF Retiree Insignia on the lower left sleeve of the mess dress jacket 1.5 cm above the cuff, or any embellishment including WO, MWO, or CWO rank insignia. The CAF Retiree Insignia is currently being produced and will be available through CANEX.

CONCLUSION

16. In conclusion, the remainder of 2024 will be very busy both from a soldiering perspective as each of our Battalions commence operations overseas and we carry out our various 110th Anniversary Celebration activities. I encourage you to participate in those you can and to take the time to reflect upon our Regiment's 110 years of service. Carol and I look forward to seeing many of you at the various events.

VP

Ray Romses
Brigadier-General (Retired)
Colonel of the Regiment
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