



Class of 65 Newsletter

Edition 64-September 2013



Disclaimer: This Newsletter is produced for members of the RMC Class of 1965 and is based solely on inputs from members of the Class of 65. It is not an official publication of the Royal Military College nor does it purport to represent the views or opinions of all members of the Class Editorial staff still lacks the linguistic skills to produce a bilingual version.

Editor's Corner



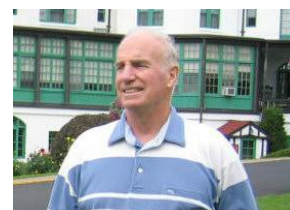
The first order of business this month is to offer belated condolences to the family of our classmate, **6351 Richard (Dick) Ouellette**, who passed away in Barrie, Ontario on 10 August.

We will be continuing to follow **Phil Bury's** trek across Sicily, but before getting there, **Ernie Cable** has some feedback to **Gaetan Dextraze's** book report in the last edition. **Rick Johnson** sheds some light on the flag controversy raised by Victoria Edwards in the last edition.

Bill Rattray reports on some very rewarding volunteer work that he and **Al Wilson** are engaged in. **Jim Carruthers** has provided a photo of the recent Royal Roads Class of '63 reunion. Finally, I noted a series of photos in a recent e-veritas that featured College sports teams from our period and thought it useful to reproduce them periodically in this and subsequent editions.

Before launching into this busy agenda, we have received confirmation of the date for the **2013 Class Teaching Excellence Award lecture**. It will take place in Currie Hall on Tuesday 26 November between 1900-1100. As usual, it is hoped to have a good turn-out from the class. More details to follow as they become available.

Ernie Cable provided the following in response to **Gaetan Dextraze's** book review of "*The Untold Story of Canada's Cold War Maritime Hunter*." - *The book which Gaetan Dextraze recommends in your newsletter, "The Canadair Argus - The Untold Story of Canada's Cold War Maritime Hunter" was, in*



fact, based largely on a historical paper that I wrote for an Air Force Heritage and Historical Workshop several years ago. The authors, Bert Campbell and Cary Baker, acknowledge my contribution on the "Acknowledgements" page near the end of the book. The "Epilogue" (page 183) at the end of the book is attributed to me and is taken verbatim from my paper.

The Argus was my first operational aircraft and the thousands of hours over the North Atlantic and the Canadian Arctic bring back many fond memories. The article that I sent to you several years ago was an account of one of our Argus flights from Thule, Greenland to the North Pole then on to Yellowknife - a 17 hour flight, which was standard duration for the Argus crews. The Argus was sophisticated for its time but primitive by today's standards."



Rick Johnson (shown here with his creation) provides the following clarification (or at least his version of it) to the query submitted by e-veritas staffer Victoria Edwards.

"I like to think that the Canadian flag was actually copied from the Frigate's "spider" flag I created during recruit year. (I guess that I do have to admit that our spider flag did bear an uncanny resemblance to the RMC flag, however.) I can't swear that we ever flew it from the top of the MacKenzie building, though I'm sure we tried. The

"SFMA" flag (white letters on a navy-blue background) was flown atop the Frigate, but only in 1962. By the time the new Canadian flag came into being both of these flags had long since disappeared. I was never aware of any organized resistance to the new flag among Frigateers, and I think the article in the Review was written with tongue in cheek, and bore little resemblance to the truth.

I did create SFMA (Stone Frigate Military Academy) letterhead that bore the spider logo used on the flag, and many members of #1 Squadron purchased it to use for letters to family and friends."

Bill Rattray has provided the following - *"Al Wilson and I both volunteer as tutors for the Literacy Group of Waterloo Region. Al works out of the Cambridge office and I work out of the Kitchener office.*



At the recent Annual General Meeting of The Literacy Group, both of our students received awards for their achievements in improving their literacy skills. Also they were both invited to be guest speakers at the AGM.

The Literacy Group has about 90 tutors serving about 300 students. It is pretty sad that we have so many adults lacking literacy skills in Canada.

Both Al and I are amazed at how fast these students progress once they are given the opportunity to learn. The difference between most of the students and ourselves is that we had the opportunity to finish school.

I have two students in the mid 30's, both have decent jobs, both are raising wonderful families. The main thing that they gain is confidence. They have endured a lifetime of shame because of their inability to read or write. As you can appreciate, anyone who holds down a job and raises a family with co-workers and friends not knowing that they are unable to read or write, certainly is not stupid. Once they realize that they are not dummies, up goes their self-esteem, and they are off to the races.

We both find this type of work very rewarding and would recommend that others find the Literacy Group in their community and give it a try."

Here is a photo provided by **Jim Carruthers** of the Royal Roads graduating class of 1963 at its recent 50th anniversary celebration.



FRONT ROW [Lying down]: Dick Wright, Jack Harris and Bruce Corbett

SECOND ROW: Jim Kempling, Reg Bird, Keith Ambachtsheer, Steve Burrridge, Stu Smart, John Wilson, Gerry Presley

BACK ROW: Dallas Mowat, Bob Beardmore, Roman Jakubow [partially hidden], Steve Arnold, Brent Abbott, Bob Jenkinson, George Brown, Bill Liggitt, Ken Clarkson, Roger Chiasson, Jim Carruthers, Doug Armstrong, Mike Grandin, Doug Cope and Dave Cooper.

Present but not in the photo are Bill Rattray and Jim Cale

In Edition 63 we provided **Phil Bury's** backgrounder to HUSKY 2013 and the first of four letters that he wrote to family and friends of his experience. The following is the second of his letters.

Family and Friends

The hills, back roads and farm tracks of Sicily resound with warning cries of "Caaarrrr!" (Sometimes a wag will add "somebody move the nets") occasionally interspersed with "Truck", "Tractor" or "Goats", as a small band of intrepid Canadians wends its way

over hill and dale in our best approximation of the path of 1 Canadian Infantry Division seventy years ago.

We start at whatever time it takes to make the 15-30 km through the (relative) cool of the morning to our destination by 11am. There the small but magical corps of 1st Canadian Pipes and Drums play us into the central piazza of a town liberated by Canadians on the same day in 1943, and we are greeted by the mayor, lay a wreath on their war memorial, exchange speeches and mementoes, and are sometimes even treated to lunch. Lunch is the sumptuous Italian three courses, and in spite of the exertion I doubt if I've lost an ounce.



The Seaforth & Husky 2013 Pipes & Drums

For me the usual high point of the day is to march into the town behind the pipes and drums, past often significant crowds, cheering and waving. We don't pretend to be soldiers, so we wave back, dart into the crowd to hand out pins and (mostly to kids) miniature flags, and shake the occasional hand. It becomes clear to us that our forebears are not regarded as enemy invaders but as liberators, freeing Sicily from the hated Fascists. We're accompanied by the mayor and council, the town band (each town has one, usually very good) and the local veterans association. The main piazza is filled with people, some who remember our army's coming, sometimes an Italian veteran of the war, who happily greets the distinguished Canadian veteran, Sherry Atkinson, who is travelling with us.

On the other hand, perhaps I might call this a high point, sad as it is: We stand by the side of the road before a row of white markers. We've just planted them, but they were made a while ago by schoolchildren in Canada and in Sicily. Each bears a depiction of red maple leaf and an Italian flag, and a small plaque that in Italian explains that near here the young Canadian named



on the plaque died seventy years ago. The marker is often sponsored, typically by family, by a regimental association or, touchingly, an Italian-Canadian. Our chaplain says a prayer, and at each marker one of us will read the name and unit of the young man who fell. Then a piper plays a lament as we bow our heads or stare into space, lost in our thoughts of a young Canadian whose life was cut short too soon and so long ago.

And I can't forget the moment when our march began. Early in the morning of 10 July, we stood on the section of the beach that was called Bark West. We had planted markers to commemorate those lost at sea and in the air even before the invasion began, seventy years ago that morning. Another set of markers named those who fell that very morning as they made their way onto and off the beach. Prayers were said and short speeches made and we commenced our trek with a walk of several kilometres into Pachino town. There the reception was terrific. The streets were lined with what seemed like the whole population of the city as schools, the Scouts, the town band, the local police and firefighters, and just about everyone accompanied us to the town square, where a monument was unveiled, and wreaths laid on it and on the town's war memorial. There was no doubt that we were welcome, despite the casualties and damage caused by our army's passage in 1943.

March, ceremonies and lunch completed, we might tour the town, or go straight back to our quarters. So far we have been quartered in the fire hall in Pachino, a sports palace in Caltagirone, a school in Raddusa, and a sports palace in Regalbuto. All the townspeople seem to know who we are. An organizing committee has usually done publicity beforehand and in many towns posters are everywhere.

My fellow marchers are a mixed lot, all becoming good friends. Several - myself included - are the children, grandchildren or other relations of soldiers who came this way. Others are connected to regiments who shed blood here. Several are writers and historians. All are determined to ensure that respect is paid to those who gave their lives to protect Canada, free Europe, and lay the foundation for peace that always seems transitory but is none the less always worth fighting for. We know we tread on sacred ground. I'm glad I'm here.

Anyone who wants to publish, or pass on, this scribble is welcome to. My best regards to you all from sunny Sicily.

Philip

To close off this edition, I have cribbed a vintage photo of the 1964-65 Rep Boxing team from a recent e-veritas. Not a particularly handsome group of pugs but nonetheless, fairly successful as we overcame the University of Toronto in back-to-back tournaments. I like to regale those who will listen that I was the 1964-65 Canadian Inter-Collegiate light heavyweight boxing champion, neglecting to mention that only two universities were involved!



Closing Notes

Special thanks again to Phil for allowing us to share his letters, but also to our other contributors who have provided some interesting and at least in one case, inspirational input. Keep it coming. I am off for a cruise around the Black Sea for the first couple of weeks in October so the next edition may be a bit adrift.