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LORD STRATHCONA'S HORSE (ROYAL CANADIANS)

NEWSLETTER

Volume 17, No. 1

Newsletter Editor: 'Mucker' Al Langan

Spring, 2002

Strathcona Mounted Troop Report

The winter months, so-called "off" season for the **Mounted Troop** has kept **Canada's** only cavalrymen very busy.

The **2001 Musical Ride** season ended on a picturesque October day in **Edson, Alberta**. Upon completion of this ride, the horses were put to pasture and the Troop began some well-deserved leave. Upon return from our block leave period the Troop began an aggressive search for new mounts. This search yielded the purchase of two quality quarter horses, **Slapshot** a 7 year old chestnut gelding and **Summit** a 4-

year-old sorrel gelding. This, of course, meant saying good-bye to some of our old chargers. **Spirit, Sutton** and **Shrapnel** were all no longer able to perform in the Musical Ride, but were still able to be excellent pleasure horses. As such, they were all sold to different soldiers of the Regiment. The Troop is currently looking for two more horses to bring the herd to the requisite 20.

Autumn also means time for a Regimental Exercise and Gun Camp. Leaving behind a skeleton crew to tend to the horses, SMT deployed with the Regiment to **CFB**

Suffield for exercise **Strathcona Sniper III**. The majority of Mounted Troopers were under command of their old "tormentor" WO **Chris Seefried** in Transport Troop. While the remainder were honing their soldiering skills under the skillful guise of Major **Paul Pickell** in c/s 8.

Much to the Troop's dismay we were called back to tend to our horses as the **Alberta Standardbred Horse Association** (ASHA) requested our presence at

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Regimental Museum Report

2002 has been named the year of the volunteer and as the curator of our museum I have discovered how important volunteers are to such an establishment. As many of you may be aware the core of our volunteers come from retired members of our regiment but not all. During my tenure I have been lucky enough to work with many great people who have told me the real stories behind the myths that have been around since long before I joined, almost 25 years ago. These people range from troopers to officers. They all have their experiences to draw upon while serving with the unit. They were there.

We have been lucky to have others who have never served but are relatives of those who have. Our most recent volunteer **Rodney** who is a fourth generation of the **Spring** family, **Arthur, Victor, and Maurice**, for those of you who might remember them.

Our programs vary in size and description and are many in number. They range from a gallery host to assisting with special events to research in the library and archives, working with the collection and much, much, more. There is something for everyone and anyone. You will be happy to know that the educational programs at the **Museum of the Regiments** recently won a prestigious recognition award from Museums Alberta. Looking for something to do, come out and see what we are all about.

This year proves to be a hectic pace at the Museum of the Regiments as we see new people arrive to start in some new positions and take over some old ones, while bringing us into the 21st century.

Some of our old events are being maintained while new ones are being added. The overall museum will have a new look, air and feel about it within the next few years, as there are plans afoot for an expansion.

The plan is to build a 5000 square foot **art gallery** and **new library and research facility**. That's not all, we will be joined by the **Naval Museum of Alberta**. That's right, they are planning to build a new 14,000 square foot facility, attached to the new expansion. This will make us hands down, the largest military museum in **Western Canada** and second only to the **Canadian War Museum**. The plans are to keep the existing facility almost untouched and join the new building through the area where the Imperial Oil Gallery is currently housed. The Curie Café will become a new classroom and discovery room while the rest remains unchanged.

Get in on the ground floor of all this excitement. Drop by and see if volunteering is for you. Not looking to volunteer but still want to help? Check the attic or basement or the **"I love me"** wall and see what you have kicking around in all the stuff you have been thinking of throwing out. Not sure if we would want it? Give us a call or drop us a line we would be happy to hear from you. Remember the facility is yours and you should be proud of it. The staff is always available and the coffee is always on. Check us out on the new regimental website at **www.strathconas.ca**. Thanks, to all those who do volunteer.

Perseverance.

WO Darryl Crowell, MB, CD
Curator



Message from the Colonel of the Regiment

In recent editions of the *Newsletter* I have noted the need for the **Regiment** to have a more traditional year where training and activities could be undertaken without the effects of operational deployments or extraordinary events such as **Celebration 2000**. To a great extent **2001** did provide that break to the benefit of individual and collective training standards. The need for high standards of training and readiness was immediately evident in **January** of this year as the Regiment provided the lead elements of the **Patricia** battle group sent by **Canada** to **Afghanistan**.

The deployment of the **Recce Squadron** to **Afghanistan** was widely reported by the media and the commitment is obviously a departure from traditional peacekeeping, even of the **Kosovo** variety. It is equally obvious that the Squadron is doing very well and that another impressive chapter is being written in the history of the **Strathcona's**. Deployment was rapid and operations began almost immediately after arrival. Clearly, Squadron capabilities filled a void for the **American** forces in theatre and the **Coyotes**, operated by profession-

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Letters Letters Letters Letters Letters

Hello,

My name is **Shelly Alm** and I'm looking for information on a soldier who was in the **LdSH (RC)** around 1966-67 and was stationed in Germany at Fort Beausejour. His name is **Ben Millette** or **Mallette**.

He may have been a mechanic. Ben was a friend of **Lee Roffey**, my grandfather, who was serving with the Regiment at this same time.

My grandfather suffered a stroke a few years back and is unable to share memories. If you could help assist in finding Ben or sharing any memories about Lee, I would appreciate your help very much.

Shelly Alm
Wolf Creek, AB

(Any one serving in Fort Beausejour, Germany 1966-70 time period has any knowledge of this individual?. Ed)

Firstly, I am pleased to say I had a very pleasant visit by Father **Bob Greene** and his wife **Marion** during the Summer. They were extremely interested in my visual aids set up, which gives me the ability to continue using my computer for reading and seeing graphics that I receive and send to the many friends who keep in touch with me. Prior to their departure the Padre blessed my residence (that's what I call 'Perseverance'), I'm pleased they made the trip home safely, for with the hazards of the roads these days he was fortunate to have his boss as co-driver, "no reference to Marion".

It is always sad to read the names listed in the **Last Trumpet Call** of each issue of the *Newsletter*.

On the other hand it is great to hear from or about the remaining stalwarts like **Hugh Mackie, Stan Adams, George Aitken, Gord and Gladys MacKay, Percy Buzza** (still suffering with virus problems), **John Burton** who is still submitting the '**Islands Report**' for the *Newsletter*. John has had no luck in finding a younger volunteer to do this column. What say you **Bill Anderson** why not take it on?

Not much news from **Bob Bartlett** other than through his sister **Pat** living in the **Kootney's**.

I spoke to **Frank Clifford** briefly on the phone; it appears he longs for military conversation, which his present neighbours don't understand.

I haven't heard from **Bill** and **Molly May**, but will try and get in touch. The **Reid's, Gerry** and **Betty** check on me weekly.

All in all I am doing fine. I walk three to four miles daily over the **Coldstream Valley**, a First World War training ground for the **Straths**.

Have also taken on some **Seniors** events with some of my old step dance routines using oldies like "**Light of the Silvery Moon**", "**When the Saints Come**

Marching In" etc. I haven't forgotten you **Nic Nicolay** hope all is well with you and **Doris**.

Gar Hobbs and his wife **Jean** both reside in the same Senior residence as mine and wish to be remembered to the old gang.

By the way the lady I mentioned, in my last letter, who had left her crutches after visiting with me - came back and hit me with them.

Vic Binnie
Vernon, BC

*(We will have to start calling you **Vic 'Shuffle Toe' Binnie**. Thanks for your clockwork financial support **Vic** it is this, in part, and your continuous encouragement that enables this **Newsletter** to exist. Ed)*

Thank you for the notification in change of address. I was in **Calgary** Nov 21 to Dec 5, to attend my daughter (last one) wedding. All was enjoyable except for the cold spell. Just to let you know the last newsletter I received was fall 2000, any old copies laying around would be greatly appreciated.

Feliz navidad y prospero ano nuevo.

Joe Bishop
Jalisco, Mexico

*(Will mail you the two 2001 editions of the **Newsletter** you missed out on. Ed)*

Thanks for getting in contact - it is one of my must do items following my move. I left **Alberta** last summer and relocated to **Ottawa** for both family and professional reasons. As the move was on extremely short notice, there was little time for adequate planning and notification to all concerned.

Fae and I are enjoying the part of being grandparents who live in the same city as son and granddaughter. On the regimental scene, I have participated in a couple of local events and plan to be active in the **Association (Ontario Branch)**. From a professional point of view, I have been functioning as the Deputy Project Director/Manager of a major NBC equipment project. However, another opportunity in the NBC training field had presented itself, so I started another contract as the Senior Project Manager to develop NBC training strategy. Having said that, one of my first tasks is to visit the U.K. this month (February) to visit the Joint NBC Regiment made up of RAF Regiment and the Royal Tank Regiment - now that's a combination!

Tom Burnie
Ottawa, ON

(Thank you for the update of your current address. Your new career sounds quite challenging and interesting. Ed)

Received my copy of the *Newsletter* recently and noticed that **Jens Hornum** was listed in the **Lost Trails**. Well! he has

been found and I enclose his current address. I also noted that I had not mentioned the name of the mutual friend who wanted to receive the *Newsletter*, so that too is enclosed. So here is wishing the best in the **New Year** to one and all.

Bob Burvill
Surrey BC

(Thanks for the update and donation. Mrs. Joan Dommer is now on the Family Roll. Ed)

My first encounter.

I was commissioned in late July 1944 and sent to **Catterick** for a short **Churchill** indoctrination course. After five days embarkation leave it was off to **France** as a reinforcement officer, to my Regiment, the **Bufs, Royal East Kent Regiment (144 R.A.C (Crocodiles), 31st Tank Brigade, 79th Armoured Division)**.

My Squadron "**C**" was in harbour near **Bretville sur Odon** getting tracks changed and other major maintenance performed. I was introduced to my troop sergeant who eyed me with some pity, I think, as he had already seen the demise of two troop leaders. As a neophyte troop leader, you have no idea how intimidating it is for an unblooded officer to assume command of an experienced troop led by an experienced and battle hardened NCO. Fortunately, my troop sergeant was of that breed, who understanding my ignorance gave me the utmost support in finding my feet.

In early September the Squadron was pronounced fit for operations and were loaded on tank transporters for a move to the area of **LeHavre** which was to be the site of my first operation. After Recces and "O" groups our D-day was fixed for 12th September. The assault was preceded by a large (200 I think) heavy bomber raid. The rest of the attack hardly warranted that name. The **Germans** gave up in droves and much booty could be had. Down at the docks we found three large storehouses dug into the cliffs. One was empty, one was filled with **British compo packs** and the last was filled with **Pol Roger Champagne** (with an overprint on the label "**Reserve pour la Wehrmacht**"), **Benedictine liquor** and **Hennessey cognac**. The fate of this find cannot be imagined. So ended my first encounter and made me think that battle was a great game. Poor fool: **Boulogne, Calais** and the operations that followed soon disabused me of my first fond impressions.

I suppose that if one goes to war an introduction such as I had eases one in much better than a **bloody battle**.

Phil Childs
Elgin, ON

*(Thanks for the interesting epistle and the generous donation, **Phil**. Ed.)*

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The Colonel-in-Chief's Commendation

The **Colonel-in-Chief's Commendation** is awarded to **Strathconas**, who within the **Regimental Family** would be recognized by all as having provided exceptional service and selfless dedication in the interests of the Regiment, and whose long standing conspicuous commitment and perseverance have provided great benefit to the Regiment and to its objectives.

Consequently the first three recipients were presented with their commendation at the **Moreuil Wood Parade** on 23 Mar 02 by the Colonel of the Regiment LGen (ret'd) **J. A. Fox**.

Major (ret'd) **C. N. 'Nic' Nicolay** was the founding Editor (1985) of the **Strathcona Society Newsletter** and developed it into a highly popular publication noted by many as the best of its type in **Canada**. He established the criteria for both content and tone in early issues. On the one hand the *Newsletter* has served to keep members of the extended Strathcona Family informed about the Regiment and important family issues and matters. On the other hand, and perhaps of more importance, it has served to keep Strathconas informed about each other in a very personal and human fashion through the simple expedient of personal letters and anecdotes. To read the letters is to know how significant the *Newsletter* is in the lives of many Strathconas. He continued as Editor for a fifteen-year period and as such has been a major contributor of the Strathcona spirit and cohesion

Father **Robert S. H. Greene** has been an active member and popular Strathcona contributor for over half a century. Became a **Minister** following the Second World War in which he was a tank driver and with the Regiment. (The story goes that, having been nearly killed three times, he felt the good Lord must have had some reason to have him spared him so he joined the Ministry.)

Father Greene was one of the major participants in mounting the first of our **Reunions** in 1970, an event that has been held every five years and been a significant contributor to the Strathcona Family cohesion and morale. He has provided consistent personal and religious support to Strathcona events whenever asked. In a much more personal way, has sought out Strathcona's regardless of denomination wherever he was in Canada and has provided personal, religious and moral support to any Strathcona needing it. With great humour and compassion has supported and promoted the Strathcona's members for over fifty years.

Al 'Mucker' Langan assisted Major Nicolay in a significant way with the establishment of the *Newsletter* as assistant editor and has been the editor for the past two years. More to the point, has for more than

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Major (ret'd) C.N. 'Nic' Nicolay. MC, CD



Father Robert S.H. Greene



Al 'Mucker' Langan

Letters Letters *continued*

Congrats on another fine issue, keep 'em coming. It's always a pleasure to receive my copy, but some of the names are not familiar now, but the letters from us old guys do bring back many memories. Of course, the **Last Trumpet Call** column saddens one, when we read of another old friend **SOS**.

It's so good to see letters from old familiar names, like **Sean Henry**. I remember when I actually out-ranked Sean. I was a **Sergeant** and he was a young **Corporal** in the **BCD's**. We were attending a wireless course at the School in **Borden** in the early 50s. What a fine young soldier he was and I was glad to see him commissioned and watch him rise through the ranks.

I attended a **Strathcona** gathering in the **Okanagan Falls** last September and was happy to meet many old friends, including **Vic Binnie**, the other Vic (the bad one) looking chipper. I snapped a photo of him with Col **Deane-Freeman**.

I'm still writing books, I call them "free books" for I seem to give more away than I sell. I have just finished another volume and will be starting on a very explicit war novel, which will not be for the squeamish.

I do a lot of world travelling and cruising, and in two days I'm off again to **Southern Mexico**, to a little town called **Aijijic** (pronounced **ah-hee-hic**) on **Lake Chapala** where I have adopted a Mexican family with 5 children age 5 to 16. My new beautiful grandchildren are helping them through school and university.

Must close now and pack my shorts and T-shirts, off to the land of palm trees and sunburn. All the very best to my old friends for a great 2002. Bless you all.

Perseverance

Vic Childs
West Bank, BC

(Hope you have a wonderful trip and have fun with the adopted family. Thanks for donation. Ed)

I have received my fall copy of the *Newsletter*. Having attended the Reunion 2000 and joined the **Association Alberta Branch** as an associate member I now look forward to the *Newsletter* with anticipation.

I still look back with fondness and a sense of awe at the Reunion. The only disappointing part was that my old buddy **Theo Fundas** had passed away, but I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of **John Randall** from **Saskatoon** and we continue to correspond.

If you wish to recognize who I am and **Theo Fundas** look in Col **McAvity's** book "**A Record of Achievement**" at the pictures between pages 140 and 141 at the heading "B" Squadron Kitchen at Viserba. The fella standing is I, and the one sitting is **Theo Fundas**.

I am enclosing and a little for the *Newsletter*. Keep them coming. Yours truly

Jim Curtis
Toronto, ON

(Glad you enjoyed the 2000 Reunion and hope you have started planning for

the 2005 Reunion. Thanks for your donation. Ed)

Not sure how you only got part of my address I will send it again by email. My husband **Edward (Ted) Grand** is no longer with us he passed away **16 June 2001** I miss him terribly. We talked about the war so much and a lot of other memories, for I was in the **British Army ATS**. We met on the ship **Maloga** heading for **North Africa**, during those 10 days on the high seas I got to know a lot of the his friends in the regiment, and again in **Italy** where I spent 2 years. I have just finished reading **Wallace's** book "**The Dragons of Steel**", what memoirs. I still like to keep up my membership in the **Strathcona Family** and enjoy getting all the news. The last event that we attended was for **Samuel Steele Memorial** in **Orillia**, what a wonderful show the Straths put on, and those beautiful horses, Keep up the good work. keeping us widows in touch. I feel very much a part of the Straths.

Ellen Grand
Tottenham, ON

(Thanks for the update of your address and glad you enjoy the Newsletter. Ed)

Upon receiving my Fall **Newsletter** and immediately reading every word from page to page brought back many memories and names.

I arrived at the Regiment in Jan 1955 at the youthful age of 17 (seventeen). We were placed in the old "H" huts at the North end of **Currie Barracks** Calgary, where we learned, as recruits, the **Strathcona** way.

Finally in **May** of 1955 we finished our depot and recruit training and were posted to "**C**" **Sqn**.

I am enclosing pictures of my passing out parade, perhaps for publication or the archives. The class of recruits were: - **'Russ' Brinn, 'Lee' Garner, John Knight, 'Howie' Owens, Jim Powell, Harry Promm, "Boots" Schuh, 'Dad' Smith** (I believe transferred to **RCASC**), **D.E. Smith**.

The Recruit Squad instructors were: - **Lt**
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Letters Letters *continued*

C.C. Van Straubanee, Sgt 'Pat' Patterson (or was it "**Black' Patterson, Sgt Gord Beattie** (a soldiers, soldier), **Cpl Ken Dent** and **LCpl Ron Fisher**.

I also attended the **Sam Steele** memorial and dedication ceremonies at **Fair Valley, Orillia** and found it very emotional when the **Guidon** was trooped on parade, particularly when so many of the "**Old Guard**" in attendance "snapped to" with shouts of "**perseverance**" and a proper palm out salute.

Also in this issue (*Newsletter*) I see the name of '**Pat' Searle**, I was his tank driver (**Centurion**) CS 2B in **Wainwright** 1956. I believe the other crew members to be: **L/Cpl Jack Wreggit** and **Tpr 'Russ' Brinn**. I also worked for **Sgt 'Scotty' Miller** in D&M Wing and **Billy May** was the "C" Sqn **SSM**.

Enough nostalgia or you will be reading a tear-stained letter.

Damn Proud to be a Strathcona.

John Knight
Shanty Bay, ON

(Thank you for sharing your journey down memory lane. Ed)

In the Fall 2000 *Newsletter* on page 15 is the name **Colin Anderson** a **Strathcona** and a **Viet Nam** Peacekeeping veteran. I would like to write to this man, as I too am a Viet Nam veteran.

As a **Corporal** in the Strathconas I was "on loan" to the **Department of External Affairs**, holding a diplomatic passport and stationed in **Hanoi** as part of the security team for the **Canadian Embassy**.

With a locked briefcase, handcuffed to my wrist, I would get on a very old, extremely rickety and very scary **Air France** aircraft, (I think it was built before **WW2**). My flight took me across **Laos** into **Cambodia** where we landed in **Phnom Penn**. There a Canadian Embassy official would take out and or add more papers. The aircraft would then take off and fly to **Saigon**. A white car (all peacekeeping vehicles were painted white, with no insignia or flag) would then take me to the Embassy. After an overnight stay at a hotel,



I would make the return trip the next day, same route opposite directions. I would make this trip usually once every two weeks, but it always scared the hell out of me, because I expected the aircraft to crash every time we took off or landed. The plane always bounced, shook, banged and rattled so badly, I was sure it was going to fly apart.

Thank God we had a good **Canadian aircraft** that flew us back home via **Cyprus**, where we had a five-day stopover in a very posh hotel. Then on to the **Azores** where we landed at a huge **American** airbase for a five hour stop. Then on to **Ottawa** and then (by train) to **Calgary** and home to **Currie Barracks**.

Perseverance

Art Kunstman
Stettler, AB

(Sounds like a script from a 007 movie. Thanks for the donation. Ed)

Enclosed is a small donation to the **Society** to help them keep up their good work. I've also enclosed the **LFP** article from the local paper, which is really good press for a change and thought you folks may enjoy it.

I also took note of your request for "Whatever" for future *Newsletters* and as I thoroughly enjoy getting them thought I had better do "Whatever", so here is a little reflection!

Headlines in the **London Free Press** 62 years ago, in **January 1940**, "Crack Western Regiment arrives in London". What an event for London and as you know from **Dick Cunniffe's** book "**The Lost Squadron**" story, the Strathcona draft became "**B**" **Squadron 1st Canadian Cavalry Regiment (Mechanized)**. As our first evening free "our gang", **Armer, McQuarrie, Glass, Clark** and myself found ourselves at a big dance at the **Masonic Hall on Queens Ave** and as they say "the rest is history"

I took my wife out to dinner the other night, to celebrate our first meeting at this Masonic Hall that night so many years ago. When we returned home I pulled an old "**B**" Sqn photograph, taken at **Queens Park** on the **2nd May 1940**, and I can still recall the names of the entire group. Then the events of the past started: the various and enjoyable training, even route marches, map reading and on and on; like the time the whole gang were confined to barracks because of the "**Meningitis**" scare. I wonder too about all the troops in the photo, 4 Officers' and 101 other ranks. I know **Des Deane-Freeman** is the only officer still with us and maybe 10 or 12 of the OR's. How many remember having one or two route marches interrupted by a coffee/tea break in one of our officer's home? What is it they say "**no names no pack drill**"? **Wonderland Gardens** (open air dancing to the big bands), known to a good many of the boys, is still there although it is bigger with a larger covered dance floor. Although **Iris** and I don't dance too often these days but have attended the odd "**Guy**

Lombardo's night there. Maybe **Frank Clifford, Frank Haley, Lou Eyres, Joe Lank** may still remember, maybe even **Vic Binnie**.

I've nothing to report on any of the local **Strathconas**, except for **Jack Newton** who is still in **Parkwood Hospital** and does manage to get home for the odd weekend and special occasions.

I note with sadness the passing of many old friends in the last *Newsletter* and would add **Ken Sample** who passed away September 2001; Ken was the younger brother of **Morley Sample**.

Best regards to all and do keep up the good work.

Hugh Mackie
London, ON

(Thanks Hugh for your flash back memories so vividly recalled. Do you have Lou Eyres address? Thanks for the donation. Ed)

Received the *Newsletter* yesterday, read it and enjoyed it very much. You are all doing a wonderful job in putting out a great LETTER and keeping us informed about our old **comrades and friends**.

If you are in touch with **Gord McKay** you can tell him that I received my **LS&GC** medal in 1955, but was short by one-year service to qualify for the **Canadian Forces Service Decoration**. The enclosed donation is for the *Newsletter* with thanks; again, for the great work you are all doing.

Perseverance.

Bill McCulloch
Burnaby, BC

(I'll let this Newsletter inform Gord about your decoration and medal qualifications. Thank you for your kind comments and the donation. Ed)

Jock Burton's interesting "**Vancouver Island Report**" in your Fall 2001 edition contains a mistake I should correct. My **DSO** was not awarded for the **Point 204** action but for a later action in the advance from **Arnhem**. Even I did not know this until a long time after the war when I got a copy of the citation. Despite this, I have always regarded the decoration as a form of recognition of the excellent work done by all members of "**B**" **Squadron**, especially on **Point 204** (Page 322 in Colonel **McAvity's** book). In addition to the officers listed by Colonel Burton as being killed or wounded, casualties also included Trooper **A. G. Roper**, who was killed, and twelve other ranks. Although only one tank was lost, it was a severely depleted squadron that Lieutenant **Wayne Spencer**, the Acting Squadron Commander and sole remaining officer, led off the hill on **1 September 1944**.

It is of interest that Lieutenant Spencer handed over the squadron to then Captain Burton, who was in charge of the **LOB** (left

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Comments from the Commanding Officer's Hatch

Time continues to fly by at a tremendous rate as yet another *Newsletter* is set for the presses. Many changes have occurred in all our lives since the events of **September 11th**. Presently **"Recce" Squadron** is deployed in **Afghanistan** involved in the war against terrorism. The squadron is well led and well trained and has already been involved in various operations in theatre. We continue to keep the **Society** web site up-to-date with recent articles and pictures from Afghanistan. As always, the **Strathconas** continue to be in the forefront of Army operations.

During the fall, another group of Strathconas received international recognition. The **Strathcona Cambrian Patrol team**, comprised of personnel from across the **Regiment**, traveled to **Wales** to compete in the world's premiere recce competition. Although viewed as purely an infantry dismounted competition, the Strathconas took home a **silver medal**. They placed in the **top ten** of over **110** of the best teams in the world, beating not only the other two **Canadian** infantry teams, but also **Special Forces** teams from the **U.S., Britain**, and most other **NATO** countries. This was truly an outstanding achievement for our team.

As I look forward to the spring, the pace of the Regiment will remain high. While we continue to support Recce Squadron in Afghanistan, **"B" Squadron** is well under way with plans for its next tour to **Bosnia** in **September 02**. In addition, the Regiment will be in **Suffield** for the month of **April** for a live fire Brigade exercise followed by support to the **RCMP** in **Kananaskis** for the **G8 Conference** in

June. All in all, a busy spring for everyone.

This article marks my last contribution to the *Newsletter* as **Commanding Officer**. With only four months left in command, I look back with pride on the accomplishments of all members of the Regiment. Although it is difficult to relinquish command, it is made considerably easier knowing the next Commanding Officer will do very well in his new role. LCol **Jamie Cade** is a good friend and an outstanding officer; he will accomplish great things for this Regiment during his command.

I would like to thank the many people, both serving and retired who have greatly

assisted me during my tour of command. It never ceases to amaze me that the phrase, **"Once a Strathcona, always a Strathcona"** plays out often in our daily work at the Regiment. It is commonplace to hear from old friends looking to help out the Society or simply catching up on the news. All of us, both in and out of uniform, are the reason for our healthy and active **Regimental Society**.

To all of you, I wish you all good luck and success in the coming years.

Perseverance,

LCol Jim Ellis, CD



The Strathcona Cambrian Patrol Team

Once Upon A Time There Was A Subaltern

(The following is the sixth in a series of reflections penned by a Strathcona (who for now will be anonymous) regarding his service during which he considered were the "Golden" years with the Regiment. Ed)

"...as you know, I have always been for unorthodoxy and for taking risks, and I am glad you had the initiative to take them..."

**Lord Wavell to his ADC,
Bernard Ferguson**

Perhaps a partial explanation as to why Recce was to be "a cup of tea". **Wavell** was one of my heroes who conditioned a young officer to risk-taking and pragmatic problem solving.

Our **Wainwright** harbour was deluxe – the Advance Party under **'Mac' Lindsay** and his peons had scrounged very successfully. Bivouacs w/floor boards, garbage cans, etc., all reclaimed from the caches of the previous year. No cache was 'private property' if one got there first – liberation was the order of the day - despite words

and feelings to the contrary. Our maintenance area w/o tanks was virtually dustless. Re-fuelling took a fraction of the time we'd spent on Centurions the summer before. Sqn messes were utilitarian. Ours was where our ration of officer-cadets could share their experiences among themselves. They were not given effusive gobs of friendliness as **'Jim' Ellard** and **'Dick' McDonald** would testify – after a month's measuring-up on exercises it was time to socialize. Aloneness was one experience we'd each adapted to as cadets, and our first posting to a fighting squadron carried memories for life. A notable exception was O/C S. **'Stu' O'Keefe** who was given 1Tp due to **Ed Bryant's** absence. 'Stu' was an outstanding young subaltern according to **Colby Yeomans**. ('Stu' later went early to the **Congo**, returned to the Regt, and then resigned to become a teacher in **Owen Sound**. He joined the **Grey & Simcoe Foresters (Armour)** where he became Trg Offr for our **Meaford** training weekends. (I was

teaching history in **Orillia** and was Trg Offr with the G&SF there.) His grasp of armoured strategy and tactics was evident at **Wainwright** in '57.

Troop lines w/ six Ferrets, each with a bivouac for two, were spacious indeed.

An aside: Inter squadron visits between exercises were acceptable. Transportation was 'a pided'. Late one evening, the stillness was punctured with a plaintive voice – a 'tired' trooper was beseeching anyone to help him in off the track plan. He chugged around the harbour twice before his **Tp Sgt** ordered him to be quiet then corralled him and led him to his bedroll....

Sqn tactical tasks were new. One focus was to provide/penetrate screens during all phases of war. The wireless nets demanded were complex, and hilarity often resulted. Capt **'Bill' Ward's** legendary patience was sorely tried on many occasions.

An aside: Sgt **'Pat' Patterson** with Cpl **Jeff Lowrie** recalls screening for a Coy-

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Letters Letters *continued*

out of battle) cadre. The efficient manner in which Jock Burton and the surviving members got the squadron operational in less than two days testifies to their hard work, the effectiveness of the supply system and the soundness of the LOB policy. Perseverance.

LGen (Retd) W.A. Milroy
Ottawa, ON

(Thanks for setting the records straight General, (as long as we do not have to re-write any historical documents). A grateful thanks for the continuous financial support. Ed.)

Some of your readers will be interested in a message from **Rod Valliere**. Rod wrote about his recruit days at **Currie Barracks** in **Calgary**, when I was a troop officer and **George Barr** the troop sergeant, in "**C**" **Sqn** Jan 1953. He also remembers **SSM Smokey Shaw**, (and who didn't?).

Rod went on to serve with "**D**" **Sqn** under Maj **Norm Buckingham** and **SSM Connelly** from 53 to late 54. All together, a fine, life for a member of a good bunch. I am sure that others of Rod's vintage will be happy to hear from him. He now resides in **Rouyn - Noranda, QC**.

"After release, in 1956, I served 17 years in the **Quebec Police Service** and wound up **Chief of Police** in **Northern Quebec**. I left that and later became **Director of Human Resources** for **Noranda Mines, Matagami Quebec Division**. After an early retirement, I now represent the employers on the **Workman's Compensation Appeal Board** in **Quebec**". **Rod Valliere**.

Phil Neatby
Ottawa, ON

(Rod is now receiving the Newsletter and we expect to hear from him. Phil when is your big move to Kingston? Ed)

In the fall of 1954, "**D**" **Sqn** was participating in a **Brigade** exercise in **N.W. Germany**. After a few hard weeks of training we got a break and harboured in a heavy wooded area. The weather was miserable, wind and rain but we did manage to get comfortable by draping our tank tarp over the barrel of the main gun. We were able to have a small fire in a pit under the tarp.

The word came down that the **Defence Minister**; the **Honourable Ralph Campney** was doing a tour of the area. The **V.I.P** party showed up at our location mid morning just as we were busy doing tank maintenance. Our driver was also busy preparing our lunch over the fire. One bucket for the **coffee** and the other bucket contained our '**Mulligan**' stew.

The minister was dressed in a business suit and a light raincoat and he looked very miserable, wet and cold. He got a smell of the coffee and I graciously offered him a cup. Well our coffee mugs were not too clean so I took my cleaning rag from my back pocket and gave it a swipe. I could see

this was not going over too good with the **V.I.P** party. He asked for some sugar and I reached into our sugar bowl and dropped one lump into his coffee. The looks I was getting were not too friendly from the **V.I.P** party and I could feel my career in the military was in jeopardy. He said that the stew smelled good and I offered him a helping but once he looked in the bucket he declined. Our tank was camouflaged with wire and branches and I suggested he might want to have a look in the turret. Well he was a short and chubby person and trying to get him up to the turret was quite a challenge. He finally managed to get down and thanked me for the hospitality.

The **V.I.P** party seemed to be relieved to get away from our tour and I could only hope that they would not take our hospitality too seriously.

Carl Ranostay
Edmonton, AB

(Just the type of material I enjoy putting in the Newsletter. Please keep it up Carl. Ed)

Please find enclosed a notice of my husband's passing 24 August 2001. **Eldon** was a very proud member of your **Society**. After nearly fifty years he connected again with "**Big**" **Bill James** from **Saulte Ste Marie** who had served with **Eldon** during **WW2** and they had many great visits. Also with **Gord MacKay** who also lives in **Perth**.

There were three **Strathconas** came to pay their respect at the funeral of **Eldon**, '**Andy**' **Anderson**, **Lloyd Lynch** and **Martin Colpitts**. A generous **Memorial** donation from **LGen W.A. Milroy** was received. **Eldon** would have been so proud.

I'm closing a small donation for your **Newsletter**.

Mary Richmond
Perth, ON

*(Our sincere condolences on the loss of your husband Eldon. The **Strathcona Family** also lost a good friend. Thank you for the donation. Ed)*

Enclosed donation is to help with the cost of producing and mailing costs of the **Newsletter**. We, who are far away from the **Regiment**, depend on the **Newsletter** as the binding link.

I'm sure I speak for all the **Strathconas** down here on the **East Coast**, when I say how much we appreciate your efforts.

The enclosed obituary is self-explanatory but I'm sure "**C Sqn**" personnel of the **Korean** era will remember **J.C. (John) McCarthy**. All the best for **2002**, to all your readers.

Perseverance.

Colby Yeomans
Dutch Valley, NB.

*(Thanks from the **Strathcona Family** for your well wishes and big thanks for your contribution. Ed)*

It was a very big shock to me to hear through the **Society** of the passing of **Nobby Clark**. My memories of him go back

42 years, first as an instructor gunnery when I was an Officer Cadet (**Borden**). Regimental service in **Germany** 1962-65, then as one of my **Troop Leaders**, when I commanded "**C**" **Sqn** **FGH/LdSH** 1968-70 **Calgary/Wainwright**), and as my course **SSM** for **Amour Officer Phase Four** (**Gagetown**).

I'll always remember the handle bar mustache, the smile behind it and the twinkle in the eye, he was one heck of a soldier!

Regrettably, I'll was unable to attend the funeral. I sent my condolences to his family and to the **Regimental** family in attendance. We all will miss him.

Perseverance

Chris Cathcart
Beaverton, ON

(Chris I received many, many condolence messages and letters reflecting the writers' thoughts on the passing of Nobby. All were passed on to the family. Ed)

Our first year in our new home in **Mexico** has gone very quickly for my wife **Lynne** and I. Our **Spanish** is progressing slowly but surely. We had to go back to **Calgary** in **November** for our daughter's wedding (the last one), and were very glad to get back here to the warm **Mexican** climate. Our daughter and her new husband came down for a couple weeks in **February**, then two of my sisters also came for a visit.

In between our visitors I took a trip to **South America** with **Bernie Field**. We met in **Lima**, **Peru** and bused it to **Ayacucho** then on to **Cusco**. Travelling across the top of the **Andes** took our breath away at times (literally - altitude sickness, which was controlled by coca tea). I have seen some panoramic views in my time but this was absolutely fantastic. We were amazed to see all the vegetation on the **Alto Plano** from **Cusco** to **La Pas** as this is about **4000 m** above sea level.

As I've always been fascinated by ancient civilization, we took in **Machu Pichu** and then went on to **Puno** on **Lake Titicaca**. On the **Puno Bay** we visited the floating islands - they were a little spongy but interesting. From there we went to **La Paz**, **Bolivia** then visited **Tiahuanacu**. It started to get a little chilly in that area as it is very high so we decided to go into **Chile**. We then traveled back towards **Lima**, stopping at **Arequipa** and **Nazca**.

Another fascinating experience was the flight over the **Nazca Lines**. I highly recommend this adventure. On my way back I stopped overnight in **Bogotá**, **Columbia** - a beautiful city and I wished I had time to see more of it. And for you single guys - there are a lot of beautiful women in **Bogotá**. **Bernie** went **Sao Paulo**, **Brazil** then on to **Toronto** and back to **Edmonton**. We both had a great time traveling by bus (although at times our butts were a bit sore). It is great to be retired, no schedule no one to answer to, just enjoying life in general.

Joe Bishop
Jalisco, Mexico

Once Upon A Time There Was A Subaltern *continued*

Bty Group: enemy tanks were sighted, contact reported, then the enemy over-ran the Coy-Bty HQ. The information never made it down from Bde. Lesson learned – we began to carry extra 510-sets and sat on coy frequencies as a 'back-up courtesy'.

An anecdotal aside: Sgt Colby Yeomans recalls one exercise where 'Find "A" Sqn' (the enemy) was an all day task. "A complete tank sqn should not be too difficult to find – but we never did find it. Some say they were in the tank hangers in Main Camp. I can recall being parked at the bottom of the hill near **Jamieson Lake** looking up at those hangers. There wasn't as much as a wisp of smoke or dust. They were there apparently – just as well I didn't go into the camp or Len Goebel's and Al Minette'd have bagged me.

That would have been really embarrassing. I think there was no dishonour in being out-smarted by **'the Great One'**.

Major **'Danny' McLeod**, OC "A" Sqn confirmed Colby's hunch. The record becomes a tangle of ego however, Gen 'Chris' Vokes with the challenge contacted Danny: "Can you move your "F" Ech and hide them in Main Camp?" (He inferred that he wanted to steal a march on Brig **Wrinch** who commanded the friendly force). Danny's response in the affirmative resulted in the movement of all Sqn tanks

at 0330 hrs from Sqn harbours to hangers in camp. In low gear the engine and track noise was minimal. Trucks then obliterated tank tracks. If any Recce did enter Main Camp, the hangers were to be marked w/ **"Atomic Security – No Access"** signs. The following afternoon they erupted into the rear of Brig. Wrinch's force, and the exercise came to a halt before it had begun. Vokes had succeeded in embarrassing his junior. We were the pawns in the game. Lesson learned?

This initiative/ingenuity was infectious in Recce as well. There was a large area south of **Blue Route** (extension) which was avoided by all if possible. Map reading was difficult and compasses were often in error. We took a 'slack' day and marked this area w/stakes to allow us an edge in exercises to come.

An aside: Sgt **'Pat' Searle** waded/swam the **Ribstone** to get 'enemy dispositions' in the **Border Lake** area. He re-crossed and re-joined his driver, then called in a SITREP that forced a pause in the exercise while the 'enemy' re-deployed. A feather in his cap indeed.

An aside: Sgt 'Pat' Patterson recalls the finale. **2nd Troop** went out on a wireless exercise that lasted some 36 hours without relief (sleep). The regimental motto was tested with success. Despite muttering (a

troopers' right) – the hours passed. (I believed we ought to do this before arrival in Europe. Capt 'Bill' Ward's experiences in **Korea** were a major reason in such an extended test of efficiency.) With **NCO's** like mine we could do it. Later we went for close to 48 hours in **BAOR** exercises in **Germany**.

The Wainwright Concentration '57 focussed a serious conundrum that remained with us for the next two years: how was information to be accessed – **'Seek and Peek'** or **'Push and Get'**. Tactical approaches would be different; the former would force ingenuity without aggression. The questions of degrees of assertiveness would be disputed throughout our tour with **NATO** in **4C1BG**. Observation of **American, Belgian, and British** equipment resulted in envy. The options available to our allies (Exercise enemies) were possible due to their equipment. The silence in **Ottawa** concerning our political will to measure up to our commitment to NATO was deafening. (We were fortunate nonetheless in being the recipients of 'salutary neglect' rather than the political meddling of the past twenty-odd years.)

In this manner **"Recce" Sqn** returned to **Currie Barracks**, went on leave, and prepared for rotation to **Fort Chambly** as part of **4C1BG**.

THE COBRA II STORY

Before the **veterans** of the **Italian Campaign** peg out there is an incident that occurred to the survivors of **Cobra II** on **23 or 24 September 1944**. If the story of this incident is true, and I hope that it is, it provides us with a wonderful example of the good things that can be done when reasonable men reason together and, on rare occasions, drinking together.

On 23 September 1944 **"C" Sqn Strathconas** was supporting the **Princess Louise Dragoon Guards** (we called them the **Plugs**) in a **Brigade** operation. **1st Troop**, led by Lt **W.E. Ralston** was one of the leading troops. The Plugs were encountering heavy **MG fire** and could not advance over a line of railway tracks so Lt Ralston moved forward in his tank to search for the enemy. His tank got into a hole, or soft ground and he could not extricate the tank. His Troop Sergeant, Sgt **Costello**, moved over to attempt to recover the bogged tank. His tank was hit by **anti-tank fire** and Costello and another member of the crew were killed. Mr. Ralston then decided to take over the Troop Corporal's tank, **Cobra II**, with the intention of joining the other leading troop. The troop Corporal of Cobra 11, Cpl. **Lake**, stayed with the Ralston's bogged tank.

Sometime later, Ralston paused to orient himself. His tank was either under a large

tree or close to one, when it came under **mortar fire**, killing Ralston and Tpr **Barnett** and wounding Tprs **Stachera** and **Wood N.J.**

1st Troop began the battle boldly but it was quickly put out of action by a very experienced enemy force that had well-coordinated firepower. Our losses in life and in tanks were swift and brutal.

And this sets the scene for this story. On the move from **Italy** to **North West Europe**, someone in the group I was leading told me about the triumphant achievement of the survivors of Cobra II.

After losing Mr. Ralston and Tpr Barnett, the survivors of Cobra II started to look for shelter and they decided to check out a house nearby. When they reached the house, the entrance door opened to reveal **German** soldiers manning a **Machine Gun**. Our comrades were invited to enter.

Germans, as we know, are generous hosts. Someone produced some **Vino** and a party eventually happened. The two groups spoke **"soldier-Italian"** to each other. Sometime in the evening a consensus developed among the **Wehrmacht** side that perhaps there was an opportunity to get out of the awfulness of the war by surrendering to the **Canadians**. The **German** NCO was not persuaded. He was sure that his duty was to deliver his prisoners to his superiors. The **German** soldiers went to work on their

leader, plying him with drink until he could no longer resist their intention.

In the morning the Germans and their prisoners formed up and marched towards the Canadian lines. The German NCO insisted on escorting the Strathcona prisoners until they reached our lines. In due course a sentry challenged the group from the Plugs. They halted and exchanged weapons. I am told it was a very emotional moment. These guys were now firm buddies. After much hand shaking, and bear hugs the **Cobra II survivors** led their **German prisoners** into the Plug defenses.

Another problem arose. Some of the Plugs had suffered from the enemy resistance the day previous and wanted to seek revenge. A row broke out between the Straths and the Plugs before cooler heads prevailed.

If my description of this episode is generally true, I think it deserves to be verified and put into the historical records. I know that at **Armistice** and at **Christmas** we are often reminded of the **British** and **German** soldiers of **World War I** who entertained each other with Christmas carols and eventually played soccer. When I hear those stories, I think of the story I heard about the survivors of Cobra II in 1st Troop, C Squadron.

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LdSH(RC) Association (Alberta Branch) Report

Your Committee for 2002 has **Don Crossman** as President, **Peter Wonderham** – Vice President, **Gary Lee** – Treasurer/Membership, **Keith 'Slider' Welch** – Social Director, **Dave Cathcart** – Museum, **Jerry Cluett** – Hospital and the Secretary's position is still vacant. **Ken Vivian** stepped down as Membership, as other commitments require more of his time than he had anticipated. Thank you ALL for your work in 2001. The **Annual General Meeting** contained a full agenda and all members have received a letter and year-end financial statement.

There were a number of members awarded **Lifetime Membership** they are: **Bob Bartlet**, **LGen J Fox**, **MGen J Gardner**, **LGen J Gutknecht**, **Mr W Howard**, **'Mucker' Langan**, **Bill May**, **Col J McAvity**, **LGen W Milroy**, **MGen C Milner**, **MGen P Neatby**, **Nic Nicolay**, and **Lord Strathcona**. The Association welcomed four new **Honour Members**; **Earl Cady**, **'Vic' Binnie**, **Col Des Deane-Freeman**, and **'Shad' Shadbolt**. A distinguished and well deserving group.

People – Places – Things.

Our Vice Peter Wonderham – has drafted a very informative and valuable information package for **Spousal** use in the event of your partners death. It will be available in **2003 (on request only)**. The document is easy to read and understand with current **Federal** and **Provincial** department phone numbers. It contains many helpful hints and reminders on benefits you are entitled to and who to call.

ID MacKay's famous luncheons are still held at the **Horton Road #285 Legion**, and the Old Guard appreciates the Regiment allowing soldiers' time to come down and share stories. Greatly appreciated.

Barry Pridge our condolences on the loss of your Stepfather (a Strathcona) January 2002.

Mrs **Jeanette Clark** – to you and your family our condolences. We also feel the **loss** of a long time, dear friend **'Nobby'**.

Reunion 2005 – A Questionnaire will be sent with the Fall *Newsletter* and please fill it out as best you can, it is a Valuable document for the committee planning this event. **Early, Yes, but much of the planning needs to be done early.**

Donations to the Association – We are very grateful to the many generous members for their donations and you can be assured the monies are spent wisely.

Membership – Our membership could be increased with your much needed help. This Association is the one that plans and organizes the Reunions, and as a member you will receive first hand information and the best registration fee.

Orley Whalen – writes, sadly I just lost another brother, leaving only Gord and myself out of 9 brothers. **Gord** and **Alice**

are both doing well. To you and your families, we send our condolences.

LGen Fox, **LCol Ellis** and **RSM Biener** have been very supportive of the Association over the past years. It is also important to recognize their spouses **Caroline**, **Suzanne**, and **Sandy** who unselfishly give of their time and support. **Thanks** to all of you. The President also was very grateful for your personal guidance on many issues.

Bill May – Purchased a Brick on behalf of the Association in support of the **New Colonel Belcher Hospital**. Thanks Sir.

Father Greene – continues to visit across the country keeping in touch with Strathcona Family members.

Breckenreid's Rick, **Danae**, and **Cody** from **Nicosia Cyprus** send their best wishes to **ALL** for the New Year.

Orillia Legion holds a **"D" Day Dodgers** celebration each year Honouring a specific unit, both serving and former members. In 2000 they honoured the Strathconas. Their next celebration is **10 to 12 May 02**. Good work, keep it going.

Iris Derenowski – writes, **Peter** has been in the Nursing Home for three years now. He requires a lot of care, as he can not do much for himself.

Frank Thiessen – He will be undergoing some surgery in Feb 02. Good Luck Frank and a quick recovery.

1813 LdSH (RC) Cranbrook Cadet Corp – looking for financial support to pay down their hall mortgage, perhaps you can help, we have.

E-mail – the Regiment is monitoring our site through their web page <www.strathconas.ca> just click the **Society** bar then the **Alberta Branch** link.

Earl Cady – sold his house in six hours, a record I think and he is moving just down the road.

Larry Adams – writes, **Dave Ryan**, **Doug McPherson**, **Charlie Van Luven** remain in good standing with the **KVA**. The three of us attended the **2000 Reunion** and marvel at the great experience and enjoyable time we had, we really appreciate the efforts of the committee. We're ready for 2005.

Dick Hudson – writes, had two broken fingers and a bone above the knuckle. A cast was put on but very uncomfortable and was replaced after Xmas making it hard to write. Harder still is watching out for **Shad**.

It is obvious to me as President that there are still some very strong and dedicated Strathconas out there showing their support to the Alberta Association Branch. You may not be aware how important and the significance this support is to the Executive. It is not only the **MANY** members who give donations but the letters giving **MORAL** support that is appreciated too. Your 2002 Committee is ready and willing to carry on with Association business and continue **Reunion 2005** planning on your behalf. Over the last few years many of our members have passed on and I encourage their spouse to maintain a link to the Association. I saw many widows, widowers at Reunion 2000 who were delighted they attended.

Be Good to your self, we'll talk in the fall. **PLAY SAFE, AND ENJOY YOUR SUMMER.**

Don Crossman
President

Vancouver Island Report

Greetings from the Left Coast or Canada's Great South West. **John Burton** insists that he is pressed for time and asked (?) that I pen this missive.

A short note about our little group that we call **"Strathconas and Friends"**. When we sit for our **Moreuil Wood** luncheon we are a mixed bag, with **medics**, **posties**, **mechanics**, **pay** types and the other **black hat** Regiments. There is even an ex **gunner** or so. The attached personnel had at one time or another served with the **Regiment** and of course the other black hatters attend in order to raise their standing in the community. But enough of that.

With deep regrets I mention that **Lindy Kukans** widow, **Millie**, passed away on 15 Dec 01. Lindy was my driver in **Egypt** and he could turn 26 ozs of **Rye** into 2 gals of **Slivovitch** at the drop of a hat since he spoke **Yugoslav**.

There is not much real news out here. I suppose we're all a bit older and some ailing a little more but hanging in there.

Roy Foote sends his regards from **Seattle**, and **Peter Sybrandy** the same from **Toppenish U.S.A.**

I've included copies of pages from a book I picked up a couple of years ago and as you can see they refer to the Boer War. The book was published in 1903 and was written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who served as a civilian field doctor from 1899-1902. The map has changed as far as some Place names go but my last UN tour was north of the Orange River.

In closing, this 8 Mar 2002, I'm wonder if there is some way to have Albertans close their gates. We, your neighbours, don't need 8 inches of snow.

Bill Anderson
Sooke, BC



PERAMBULATIONS OF THE PERIPATETIC PADRE

Since my last epistle considerable amounts of water have flowed down the Melfa! Early in October it was my great privilege to spend a delightful evening with **Jim** and **Marg Spencer** in Mervin, Saskatchewan. Little did we know that within a few weeks **Jim** would be dead.

What a great time we had re-fighting the Melfa, Torrice Crossroads and the Gothic Line. My travelling companion and I were treated royally by **Jim** and **Marg**, bedded down for the night after a lovely supper and sent off in the morning after a hearty breakfast. **Jim** was my driver in the latter part of the Italian Campaign.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend his funeral, as on that day I was on my way to Winnipeg to take the Memorial Service for **Bob Ellerbeck**. **Bob** as you probably know, was the driving force behind the first big Strathcona Post War Reunion, held at the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg in 1970. He served several terms as president of the Winnipeg branch of the Association. His daughter Carol and nephew Gary Ellerbeck attended the service at St. Bede's Anglican Church, which contains Strathcona Memorials. 2nd War Straths in attendance included **Ernie Copper**, **Roger Ptosnick**, **Jim Fargy**, **John Hall**, **Tom Stanley**, **John Goodmanson** and yours truly as the officiating padre. Strathcona widows included **Elaine McGregor**, **Marie Reahil**.

Through the kindness of Association President **Don Crossman** my air fare to Winnipeg was paid. The regiment laid on a driver in the person of Captain **Cameron White**, a serving Strathcona stationed in Winnipeg who drove me all over town visiting WW II Straths including, famed "B" Squadron wireless op, **John Hall** and **Harry Stein** who was unable to attend the Church service because of a medical

appointment. A stop at the Deer Lodge Hospital included a visit with **Chum DCM Macey** whose well deserved decoration was won at the Melfa in company with Recce Leader Lieutenant **Ed Perkins** DSO the only subaltern in the regiment to win this high decoration. Many of us thought he should have received the VC. This was my last visit with **Chum**, whose marriage I had officiated at when I was rector of St. Bede's in the early 1970's.

As I write this letter (February 27th) a phone call from **Roger Ptosnick** in Winnipeg informs me that **Chum** was buried to-day. Thus our last DCM has gone to his reward.

In early December we received the sad news that my driver in Holland, **Lloyd (Jock) Spilde** had died in Provost, Alberta. Lloyd had a distinguished career in Provost (250 miles north west of Calgary) where he served on town council and later as Mayor. He was the principal force in setting up the new hospital in Provost, one of the finest in all Alberta and where he spent his last days. His faithful and dear wife **Della** asked me to take his funeral service, which I was honoured to do. On the morning of the funeral I was privileged to bless a magnificent hospital chair, which Della had bought for Lloyd and which now, serves as a memorial to him in the Provost Hospital.

On a trip east earlier this month I had a great visit with Brigadier **George Wattsford** who was badly wounded at the Melfa while serving as a major. We recalled many of the happy days under that great CO Colonel **Paddy Griffin**. One of the Brigadier's favorite heroes is one **Frank Clifford** who fresh out from England in the late 1920's joined the Straths as a trooper in Calgary. In a distinguished military career **Frank** rose through the ranks ending up as

a captain. In the 1980's because of his loyal support of Little Trinity Church and Wycliffe College, this latter college awarded **Frank** an Honourary LL.D. So we now address him as Dr. **Clifford**, a most deserved honour. I was privileged to be at the Convocation when **Frank** received his degree. When I tried to make an appointment to see **Frank**, he had to beg off, because he was on his way to his old law office to do some work! And **Frank** is only 89. Can you imagine what he will be up to when he is 100!!

Around the corner from **Frank** I did manage to catch **Len "Alley" Katz** and **Lee** at home. **Len** is not too well and had to cancel his usual winter trip to Florida. We hope that he will be in better shape for next year's trip.

Back in Calgary my wife **Marion** and I had lunch with **Alice Budner** today. **Alice** is the widow of that dare devil DR **Nicky**, who could do everything with a Norton except make it talk!! **Billie May** and **Don Lake** take in Strath luncheons with yours truly at #285 Legion. **Roy Jardine** is home from hospital but is still confined to a wheel chair. He hopes to be back on his feet sometime next year. In the meantime his devoted wife **Inez** is spoiling him rotten! **Fred Daunais** while still on Dialysis is home from hospital. **Frank Thiessen** is home from hospital and looking a lot better after having surgery. And last but not least, faithful "B" Squadron Orderly room clerk, **Alex Ozirny** is in the Colonel Belcher Hospital where his dear wife **Jean** visits him almost daily.

So long till next time. ARRIVIDERCI and POOSH ON STRATHCONAS from the Association Padre and Lance Corporal (retired).

(Father) **R.S.H. Greene**
Calgary, AB

MILLENNIAL MEMORIES

1952 continued to be packed with events and learning traditions, some military and some social procedures. The most historical occurrence, of course, was the death of **KING GEORGE VI**, on February 6th. The ensuing mourning and elevation of **Princess Elizabeth** to the throne as **Queen** called for military parades, black armbands and fewer social activities. **Lord Strathcona** visited the Regiment after his visit to the USA. One of the pictures below was taken in the H-Hut cum Officers' Mess. As I recall, the two gas heaters were going full blast and Lord Strathcona, the grandson of the first Lord, was very appreciative. The second picture was taken at the regimental parade, with Lord Strathcona in the hangar with LCol **Deane-Freeman** and Capt **Hugh Mackie**.

-continued on page 11



Lord Strathcona addresses the Regiment. L to R. Lord Strathcona, Capt Mackie, LCol Deane-Freeman.

Millennial Memories *continued*

The only sticky moment of the Lord's speech came while complimenting the Commanding Officer and the Regiment, for its capabilities and professional reputation. He finished his comments by saying "I am also very pleased to be with the regiment tonight with an officer with my family name." At which point most people looked at each other trying to figure out whom he was referring to. I had never experienced such a complete hush, nor seen such an exchange of looks before. Lord Strathcona, a consummate speaker, saved the day by saying he understood there was a Lt Smith at the dinner. **Jack Smith** later spent some time with the Lord in the anteroom.

There were other officers at the back and despite the lack of blues and mess kit, it was an excellent evening. Some of us would be seeing Lord Strathcona in Germany, in **1954** when he inspected "D" **Sqn** in Fort Anne, Werl.

Some time after Lord Strathcona's visit, the subalterns were given the good news that the regiment was once again being invited to provide escorts to the **1952 Debutantes** at the annual **CALGARY HIGHLANDERS BALL** in the **Palliser Hotel** in Calgary. With no apparent volunteers in the offing, and the subs keeping a low profile, the selection was being approached with caution. The social aspects of the escorts' ability to dance some five types of music including the fox trot; the waltz, a South America medley, Highland dancing with the Highland Fling and reels were all pretty daunting. More daunting was the expectation of the number of practices at night in the Palliser under the scrutiny of the **Dance Mistress**, an expert RSM in waiting, charged with training eleven debutantes, eleven subalterns and other family spectators. You can imagine the ribbing the regiment's **five** subalterns

took over the weeks leading up to the big night, **6 June 1952**. Luckily I hadn't been scooped up for reasons unknown to me back at the beginning for which I was grateful. Anyway, I was safe and sound in **Wainwright** with my Motor Transport...Or so I thought!

I was summoned to the CO's tent on 5 June around mid-morning with the stellar information that one of the regiment's dancers was **hors de combat** and I was "IT". My cup had overflowed and I was provided a vehicle with wooden benches in the back, plus sandwiches for lunch en route. Further, we would travel wearing the current khaki raincoat against the dust and taking the necessaries accruements for the ball. We did all that, the dust was bloody awful, and looking back on it we could have been taken for **Butch Cassidy** and the **Sundance Kid**. The benches kept sliding; the CO drove like a bat out of hell.

We made it to a very quiet **Currie Barracks** in record time. Then we had to present our selves to the **Calgary Highlanders** and the Dancing Mistress, who was less than impressed with me and somewhat cautious with the Commanding Officer. The final rehearsal was about to start and it didn't look too encouraging for me. After much palaver, I believe the CO convinced her that I was fairly harmless and should partake in the last drills and pick up the moves. As it turned out, I was paired with a very attractive young lady, **Ann Marshall** who was patiently teaching me all the steps and lead me through the dances. On the night of the Ball it went well for there was no casualties. The Dancing Mistress was happy, I hadn't let the regiment down and I was happy to return to Wainwright.

Ken Barnaby
Ottawa, ON

Dear John

(This is the twelfth in a series of fictional father-to-son letters, which were penned by the late BGen A.G. CHUBB and published in the Canadian Army Journal in the 50's. Ed)

Dear John:

Your mother and I enjoyed our weekend with you and your brother subalterns seemed to take good care to see that Mary had a good time at the dance. They seemed to be a very decent lot and it was fun for me to have a run at a regimental party again after all these years. Your mother is still complaining about the fat little Captain who walked all over her feet while dancing but I know she was awfully pleased about everything too. Mary kept babbling about how handsome all the officers looked in mess kit but I think she is a little biased towards things military. At that, I must admit it was a splendid show.

I think one of the things that impressed me most was the good spirit between the officers and the other ranks both on and off parade. The regimental sports day was very well organized and the number of officers competing in all events is certainly a good thing. I know when I had a regiment I always felt very strongly that one of the best methods for a young officer to get to know his troops was to compete with and against them. It doesn't really matter if you are a good athlete just so you get out and try. One other thing I should mention in this regard is to emphasize how important it is for the officers to attend any and all sporting events in which regimental teams are competing. It builds up the regimental spirit when the spectator strength is at near capacity and the officers must give lead. By the same token, it is pretty shattering to the opposition when the regiment turns out for every game win, lose or draw. Incidentally you will probably find that your best young NCO's are the athletic types who take part in all of the sports.

I don't wonder that the CO is worried about the number of men who are taking their discharge. There are plenty of reasons that can be given for the high turnover in the army as a whole, high rates of pay available in civvy street, booming industry, etc., etc. However, are you sure that you are doing everything at your level to keep your own troops relatively contented? A lot of the big things are beyond your control but there are a lot of seemingly small points that can cause dissatisfaction that can be remedied at the troop leader level. Be honest with yourself, are you doing everything possible to help the man who comes to you with a problem. I know it takes time to straighten out lawyers, doctors, wives, children, promotion, trade qualifications, pay etc. but that is part of your job. Listens to the problem sympathetically and then do

-continued on page 13



Officers' Mess Dinner on the occasion of Lord Strathcona's visit - 1952.

STRATHCONA'S OF THE EAST

Greetings from the Strathcona's of the East. As I was recently reminded by LCol "**Spike**" Hazleton, next to the **Regiment**, CFB Gagetown, and more specifically the **Armour School**, has the highest concentration of **Strathcona's** anywhere in the country. The school is presently well established with Strathcona Officers and Snr NCOs. Its headquarters has LCol "**Spike**" Hazleton at the helm with CWO **Doug Harvey** employed as the RSM role and Major BJ Walsh is the Chief Instructor.

Other Officers and NCOs employed at the school include: Major **Chris Rankin**, OC TSS, Captains, **John Cochrane**, **Scott Gooch**, **Dan Hardy**, **Rob Hume**, **Errol MacEachern**, **Chris Nolan** and **Jason Steeves** on the officer side with CWO **Russ Ells**, MWO **Kevin Lovett** and MWO **Dave Blanchard** rounding out the senior staff employed within the school. Having a total number of **110** all ranks posted to the

school and approximately **20** others being employed throughout the base ensure the Regiment is well represented on this coast.

The School is heavily involved in the **Wave of Work (WOW)**, the re-writing of all armour courses conducted across the country. There are a number of personnel participating in this project. It runs from the development of **Qualification Standard (QS)** through to the completion of the courseware. Involved in the officer **Developmental Period 1 (DP)** boards were Major **Jamie Hunter**, Sgt **Tom Holland** and Captain **Colin Michaud** before the process drove him to retire in December 2001. CWO **Russ Ells** assisted in the spearheading of the **DP 1 Crewman** and **DP 4 SSM** courses. As if redesigning these courses were not enough to keep him busy, CWO **Russ Ells** has taken on a renovation project, that of the School Strathcona classroom. True to his mentor, **Bob Villa**, he has

returned the glory to this once proud classroom. Renovations are all but complete with the final addition of the **Wanklyn** prints soon to be added.

In fine Strathcona tradition, we have a large number of social events in the works over the next few months. Functions include: the **Atlantic Area Black Hat Mess Dinner** on 23 March 02, in which there will be a fine re-enactment of the Battle of Moreuil Wood; our annual **Moreuil Wood Smoker**, 28 March 02, and finally the officers **Moreuil Wood Dinner** on 6 April 02.

Remember, if you are going to be at or near the School, drop by and pay a visit to your fellow Strathcona's. Or just see our **30 Leopard C2's**. We are all looking forward to receiving the **Spring** edition of the *Newsletter*.

Captain John Cochrane
CFB Gagetown, NB

What's in a Name – Which is not on a NameTag?

Strathconas like to be friendly with some reservations to those who take themselves too seriously. Let me give you a few examples of that camaraderie I have heard over my years in the RCAC. Many of these affectionate nicknames were used in the Strathconas or other RCAC Units.

Mud Guts Stevens – Drank copious amounts of chocolate milk.

Hose Nose Murphy – Long snout.

The Cobra II story continued

This story was well known around the Regiment. **Bill West** knows the story and so does **Percy Buzza**. In fact, Percy says he has recounted the incident to groups from time to time to show that war is not always hell. At the time it may have been regarded as an interesting drinking story. Er! Well, a Piss-up

But now, I think we should be proud of the men who were involved. It's part of the Perseverance idea that is instilled in our members. Think of it. These men brought in several prisoners. There were many decorations that were awarded to soldiers who successfully captured a prisoner. Our lads did it without force. I think they were heroic. Let's find out who the unknown **Third Man** was. Some may quibble the fact that they were drunk on duty. Nonsense! Drinking was an essential element for the success of their mission, which was to find a way to get back to the Regiment. In addition, it must be remembered that two had been wounded and were perhaps suffering some considerable pain and distress. They quite possibly needed the Vino as a pain control. Think about it!

Jock Burton
Victoria, BC

The Anteater – Longer than Hose Nose Murphy's long snout.

Wing Nut – Big Ears.

Cowboy Schultz – Couldn't ride a horse but wore a Stetson hat off base.

Babbler Riching – Could not stop talking, but said nothing worth remembering.

Shadow Redding – Too thin to cast a shadow.

Pumpkin Head Carlson – Very large head.

Gobbels – Became Goatballs.

Meathead Jones – In the Military Police (A.K.A.) "Meatheads", as opposed to Double Clutching Jones who drove a truck in the Service Corps. It's important to know which Jones is the real Meathead as in point of fact both were.

Patterson – This could take a whole page, but here are a few – Black Pat – Dirty socks Patterson – S.L. and A.K. (initials) Patterson – Paddy Patterson and on and on.

Slewfoot Brant – Big feet.

Mad Jack – Fat Jack – Black Jack – Smiling Jack and Flapjack.

Rip Cord Bill Barnaby – Officer killed in a free fall parachute drop because he forgot something basic. Duh? THUMP!

A chap with the name **Hogalinshirtze** – Became Hockey Shorts

A Francophone chap with the name **Raincourt** – Became RainCoat.

Bulgy McArthur – Officer who thought he was thin and he wasn't – his tight uniform gave him away.

Chicken Major Jones as opposed to **Col. Saunders** – A Major who had a night job delivering "Chicken On the Way" (I swear it's true!).

Fireplug Murphy – Built like one.

Fighting Frank Worthington – Gener-

al F.F. Worthington father of RCAC and **Peter Worthington**, columnist.

Farting Frank Barber – Same initials different qualification and rank!

Lying Ted – Guess why.

Sneaky George Curundi – Was just a smart person – like a Car Salesman – only couldn't be trusted at cards either.

Horseshit Wallin – He was full of it and a real horse's ass – hung out with Flimsy Flinch.

Numb Nuts Allen – Really stunned.

Pussar Parker – Origin UK – thought Canada was still a colony and the Lime Juicers are superior – talked about "having children" and not KIDS.

My all time Fav' – **Chief Walking Eagle** – A Commanding Officer I once had – he was so full of crap he could never get off the ground. Became a General in the end, didn't fly any better in Ottawa. I wonder if he's more aerodynamic in heaven now?

This just proves that Strathconas are a friendly bunch and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

As Major "**Old Cock**" Stanford said, "Who's for a shot of SRD?" (Service Rum Demerara) then we'll lift the horses tail and look the situation right in the eye.

So **Perseverance** and **Perspiration** it takes both to get promoted.

"Take care now." You may not know what to take care of, but take care of it NOW anyway!

Galloping Geezer (Is Not My Real Name, I hope you realize – Duh – Thump).

Disclaimer: Most of these fine folks are dead. To avoid embarrassment or hurt to any living or relatives of the nicknames given, actual names are not used.

Jack Downey
Calgary, AB

LdSH(RC) Association (Ontario Branch) Report

The Branch focus has been communications with all **Strathconas** throughout Ontario. We now have a well functioning web site (as does the Regiment) and more than half of the Ontario family receives routine e-mail updates on events, activities and the moves or passing of members.

We are pleased that LCol **Jamie Cade** has been selected to be the next **Commanding Officer** of the **Regiment**. For the past two years LCol Cade found time to serve us all as an active member of the Ontario Branch Executive.

For those who don't have access to e-

mail we have decided to send a newsletter three months out of phase from the Society Newsletter. This will give each member more news over a broader period.

Our new web site has been developed by our webmaster, Capt **Eric Chamberland, Montreal**. We are very grateful that he has devoted so much of his time, talent and effort to this project. The editor is our President, **Greg Hug, in Ottawa**.

Perseverance

Bill Jacobs
Ottawa, ON

I've come to say good-bye

In memory of **Gordan Waldner**, killed at Grid co-ordinate 165192, Korea, 02 Oct 1952. **Albert McBride** visited the grave at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Pusan, Korea on 20 April 1958.

Dear John *continued*

something about it and then most important tell the man of any progress in the settling of the problem.

A thing you should continually keep in front of you is the matter of the equal division of the dirty jobs in your troop. Unless it is carefully watched you may find some poor wretch who is always stuck for the extra duty perhaps because he is not quite as sharp as the rest of the troop. If this is happening make sure that you get it changed else you will surely have a disgruntled man in your troop.

Keep continually under review the matter of promotion from within your troop. When a man does well tell him so and push him up the ladder when the opportunity permits. Along the same vein keep a sharp eye on the trades qualification of the men of your troop. Find out what the man wants and see that he gets the necessary course.

Now if you are certain of yourself take a sharp look at your NCO's. Are they; available to the troops and are they fair and just in their dealings. If not, then you should take action and at once. By the same token be sure that you keep the matter of NCO qualifications and training in a proper perspective.

It is a big job you have my boy and if you and your NCO's are doing it faithfully and well the number of men taking their discharge will be held to a minimum. A big job and a fascinating one that has no limit no end and allow no letdown.

Lord, lord I envy you.

As ever,

Dad

I'VE COME TO SAY GOOD-BYE

I'm here by your grave, at last my friend.
I hear the angels cry.
I see your smile. I hear your voice.
I come to say good-bye.

Memories come of that long time ago.
I watch you as you die.
I hear you cry. I feel your pain
I come to say good-bye.

You're not alone in this foreign field.
Your friends are here, close by.
The birds still sing, the flowers still bloom.
I come to say good-bye.

I slowly kneel by your grave in prayer.
You speak and I reply.
I touch your stone and shed my tears.
It's time to say good-bye.

So rest in peace, my boy-hood friend,
As angels sing on high.
My prayers and thoughts are here with you.
I've said my last good-bye.

I thought of these words, as I watched my husband, Albert, kneel at the graveside of his friend.

Isabelle McBride
St Albert, AB

The RSM's corner

It would seem that a common theme of mine is tell you how busy we have been! That's because it's true!! In fact as LCol **Ellis** mentioned in an "**O**" **Group**, just the other day, he had never seen the Regiment this busy before (not that he has a lot of time here!).

Out of all the events that have gone down range this past year, the most memorable were, the **Strong Contender, Cambrian patrol team** winning a **Silver Medal**, the Regimental ski trip, adventure training, Gun camp in Suffield (our first time in the field for quite some time!) I even managed to squeeze in Exercise "**Ironsides bonspiel**" (My first in 29 years!)

Much has changed in the past couple of years in both the Cdn Forces and the Army. The day-to-day pace has picked up considerably, Squadron level rotations continue to grow, the calendar is full and multi tasking has become the order of the day. Long past are the days of focusing on one task at one time. The demands on personnel, vehicles and resources, has become a huge juggling act that all are involved in.

While all this is going on, the Regimental system continues to be under attack from all flanks. From the medical system to, the legal system, the training system, digitization, and continual Army restructure. I'm convinced that there is a cell in **Ottawa** that has a mandate to look for changes to anything that has lasted more than a year!

In the midst of this constant bombardment from outside and the hectic schedule inside, there is one group that does not always get the recognition they deserve. These are the soldiers. I'm talking about **crewman, supply techs, maintainers, technicians, medics, cooks, signalers, military police**. (I know I've missed someone!). They put up with all the changes at the lowest level they are the ones who have to make it happen and to date they continue to do an outstanding job. Well done to all of you! Keep up the great work!

Perseverance

CWO (RSM) D.M. Biener, CD



Message from the Colonel of the Regiment *continued*

als, are assisting directly in achieving coalition aims. All Strathconas will certainly join me in wishing Recce Squadron all of the best for a quick and complete success.

As can be seen from the comments of the **Commanding Officer**, the Regiment itself continues to be busy. Taken as a whole the last year may have been a more traditional one but it was certainly a busy one. It also was a very successful year. Not only was "the bread and butter" training done well, but also the Regiment was extremely successful in external competitions of both the military and sports varieties. I congratulate all involved for the large number of its particular successes in the past year. They represent high levels of performance throughout the Regiment.

Looking to the immediate future for the Regiment, life will continue to be very busy. The end of the Afghanistan deployment is still several months away. Shortly after **Moreuil Wood** celebrations the Regiment will participate in a major **Brigade** exercise including live firing to ensure that collective all arms skills are maintained. The forthcoming **G-8** conference is certain to be a heavy commitment and later in the year another squadron deployment to Bosnia is on the horizon. It is fortunate that

the Regiment contains the depth in skill and experience that it does because demands as extensive and diverse as these are demanding indeed for one Regiment in a short period.

Society matters also continue to be active. The **Alberta Association Branch** continues to be heavily involved and much of the foundation is already laid for the next **Reunion in May 2005**, which will coincide with **Albert's Centennial**. The **Ottawa Association Branch** is very active, as are numerous smaller groups of Strathconas. The **Newsletter** and **'Mucker's'** office continue to provide outstanding service while, through the benefits of new technology, **Internet** linkages are opening up much more communication within and about the family. I particularly thank those involved with our Internet advances for the speed and effectiveness we have achieved in moving forward in this area. The **Strathcona Mounted Troop**, our **Museum**, the **Pipes and Drums**, and the **Historic Vehicle Troop** all appear to be on solid footing. The result is that the name Strathconas continues to be prominent and associated with high standards.

Lastly, it appears that before the next edition of the **Newsletter**, my appointment as the **Colonel of the Regiment** will have

ended. It has been a long appointment, certainly longer than anticipated at the beginning. The period has covered a number of very significant events in our history from operational deployments, to move of the Regiment, to Celebration 2000 and all that its activities meant. The period has also seen substantial growth in the capabilities of the Regiment itself and of the Society.

Each year and its involvements were interesting and often challenging to me personally and will provide me with very positive memories. However, far and away the most memorable aspect of the appointment will be the many Strathconas I met, as individuals and in groups, those in the Regiment and outside of the Regiment, and the many, many more people who count themselves as friends and supporters of the Strathcona's. Flowing from the long-standing spirit found from within the Regiment itself, we, as Strathcona's, have developed a very unique approach and spirit. Meeting so many that possess and exhibit that spirit have been the highlight of the appointment without a doubt.

It has been my honour and pleasure to see and participate in Strathcona spirit from a very privileged position. I thank those who gave me that opportunity. Most

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Strathcona Mounted Troop Report *continued*

their annual stakes race on the 24th of November at **Northlands Park**. Normally Mounted Troop ends its season in mid-October however the **ASHA** was very keen to honour the **Regiment** and thus named two of its important races after the Regiment.

We were quick to realise why the Musical Ride season ends in October ... as the minus 15°C temperatures had many Mounted Troopers asking if they could wear their toques instead of their helmets!

December in the Mounted Troop means time for exchange of personnel. This is in preparation for the **Basic Equine Indoc-trination** course that commences in early January. This year we said goodbye to three very skilled horsemen: MCpl **Patrick Lalonde**, Cpl **Ron Sampert** and Cpl **Matthew Hull**. All will be missed for their work ethic and riding abilities. However, we were lucky to receive two very eager replacements: **Tpr Alex Diblassio** and **Tpr Curtis McCarron**.

The Christmas leave period is a time when Mounted Troop clearly establishes itself as the premier Troop in the Regiment. Unlike the Squadron vehicles **Leopards** and **Coyotes**, horses can not be "parked" for Christmas leave. As such, each rider is expected to come in a minimum of 5 days during his or her Christmas leave in order to clean stalls and feed the horses. A special thanks to MCpl **John Jans** and Sgt **Art**

Wiggins for spearheading the charge on **Christmas Day** and **New Years Day** respectively. Without dedicated individuals like these, Mounted Troop would not be what it is today.

In an attempt to return to our roots, the Mounted Troop has started re-training itself in the game of **polo**. The Troop has enlisted the help of Mr. **Gregg Garvin** of the **Polo Training Foundation of Canada** to teach us the intricacies of the outdoor field and arena versions of the game. This has benefited the Troop greatly as the cross training of riders has meant a general increase in the interest level of things equine by the soldiers as well as increasing our overall collective riding ability.

Bookings for the **2002 Musical Ride** season have already been brisk. The Troop has an excellent reputation for providing unparalleled entertainment at a reasonable price. Bookings this year range from our normal **Spruce Meadows** appearances as their official **Colour Guard** to performing for the first time to live music at the **Victoria Military Music Festival**, 14-16 June. This year we've even received inquiries for performing from as far south as **Caldwell, Idaho** (30 miles south of **Boise**). SMT is also looking forward to performing at such venues as: **Heritage Park**, **The Reynolds-Alberta Museum**, **Fort Calgary**, **Fort Edmonton**, the **Town of Rim-bey**, the **Town of Taber** and **Comox Nau-**

tical Days. For specific dates and timings of performances check our website at **www.strathconas.ca**

The highlight of the 2002 Ride Season is the probability of once again performing the **Queen's Life Guard** duties, in London, during the **Queen's Golden Jubilee** in **October** of this year. No confirmation for this event has been made as of yet.

In an attempt to make Mounted Troop more popular with our neighbours to the south, money has been allotted this year for the Strathcona Mounted Troop to conduct a small unit exchange. As such, contact has been established with another equine military unit, the **1st Cavalry Horse Detachment** from **Fort Hood, Texas**.

This outfit has 40 horses and six mules and puts on a mounted weapons display using vintage **Indian Wars** era kit. They seem to have a lot in common with the Mounted Troop and are very eager for us to visit. Their Commanding Officer, Capt **Jeff Schmidt** will be visiting with eight of his best riders from 6-13 May of this year on a cultural exchange. No date has been confirmed for Mounted Troop's reciprocal visit.

The 2002 Musical Ride season is shaping up to be one of our finest seasons ever. With 20 motivated Riders and 17 premium mounts the Strathcona Mounted Troop is set to achieve great things this year.

Lt. Ross Prokopy
Troop Leader

The Recce Troop

I joined the Regiment in May 1943 when they drafted 162 personnel from training camps, to bring the regiment up to full strength.

In late June we moved North of London to the downs, where we trained with all units in 5th Div. We all used the RAM tank that summer.

In Nov 1943 we set sail from England and two weeks later we landed in Italy.

Now we became part of and under the command of the British 8th Army. Thus we had to reorganize our complete tank set up and number of tanks per squadron. The three squadrons were "A", "B" & "C" each with 16 Sherman tanks. This also was when Recce Troop was formed. We were allotted 11 Honey tanks, which weighted about 14-ton and had a crew of 4.

This photo of Recce Troop taken in Izezem, **Belgium March 1945.**

James Adair Barrhead, AB

(This photo submitted by James prior to his passing in June 2001. I felt that it should be published for the benefit of those of his comrades who are still with us. Hoping that it will rekindle some proud memories. Ed)



1st Row: Sgt DA Armstrong, L/Cpl MC Abraham, Sgt DS Henderson, Lt PW Brunet, Capt WM Reade, Sgt JA Williams, Cpl FH Ward, Cpl RR Hudson, Cpl J Kyniski, Cpl ES Woodcock, Cpl WE Woodley.

2nd Row: Sgt FG McLean, Tpr FW Woodhouse, Tpr BC Snider, Tpr RA Thomas, Tpr LL Ledoux, Tpr JD Adair, Tpr R Peart, Tpr JE Kellestine, Sgt JW Ellerbeck.

3rd Row: Tpr WH Olimb, Tpr JK Funk, Tpr J Pringle, Tpr J Brown, Tpr WC Smail, L/Cpl HJ Keeling, Tpr DO Morier, Tpr NE Hives, Tpr HE Wright, Tpr JE Glover.

4th Row: Tpr HJ Wait, Tpr LF Steimer, Tpr JW Taylor, Tpr F Mitchell, Tpr RH Burnett, Cpl CW Carlbom, Tpr EL Harris, Tpr P Ratushniuk, Tpr RG McIntosh, Tpr L Tucker, Tpr SC Costello.

Recce personnel not in the photo that was on leave, transferred, killed or wounded in action. Also those who came to the troop after the picture was taken:

Tpr RG Cooksey, Tpr JF Duffus, Lt C Eyres, Lt EG Gaunt, Tpr EJ Farmer, Tpr GV Hains, L/Cpl SW Lamb, Tpr EO Laws, Sgt JW Lofvendahl, Sgt CN Macey, Tpr FN Manvany, Capt EJ Perkins, Tpr CR Peterson, Capt SW Phillips, Sgt WF Plomp, Tpr EH Potten, Tpr J Troudt, Tpr RT Will, Tpr WE Wreggit.

The Colonel-in-Chief's Commendation *continued*

twenty years been in charge of the **Office of the Society**. As such, on virtually a full time basis, provided the central point of contact about family matters for all Strathconas outside the Regiment. Has been the single person that most Strathconas would consider as the first from whom to seek advice or information about family matters or about the whereabouts and well being of others. Has provided the service both ver-

bally and in writing with great humour and enthusiasm which frequently covers the amount of sheer work he has provided through his personal perseverance contributing in a very significant way in ensuring Strathconas, wherever they reside, consider themselves to be part of the family.

(The above column was extracted from the Strathcona Society Web Page at www.strathconas.ca Ed)

Message from the Colonel of the Regiment *continued*

of all I thank the many Strathconas, too numerous to name, who helped me personally throughout my appointment. I know that my successor will be able to count on the same support.

As always I say to each and every Strathcona, stay in touch and stay involved.

Perseverance. **LGen (Retd) J.A. Fox**

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

In addition to those acknowledged with their "Letters", we wish to thank the following for their generous donations:

Bill Armstrong, John Ashley, Ken Barnaby, 'Benny' Benoit, Stan Broski, 'Brick' Brown, Cliff Brown, Doug Cherry, Vic Childs, 'Nobby' Clark, Carl Cole, Roy Currie, Bert Dixon, 'Doc' Dowling, George Fox, 'Art' Fancis, Grace Gordon, Doug Handling, Foster Hutchison, 'Mousy' Kaatz, Howard Katzeley, Art Kunstman, Lou Lesperance, Donald Lidster, Bill Logan, Ernie Lyng, Albert McBride, Albert McGuire, Leroy McKenzie, John McPherson, 'Dusty' G.L. Miller, Pat Mitchell, Russell Mitchell, Bill Murray, Merl Olson, 'Hank' Reid, Sam Schnarr, Jack Somerset, Wayne Spencer, John Thompson, George Thwaites, 'Inno' Vatter, 'Waddy' Wadsworth, 'Wes' Westergard, Jack Williams. (Please let me know if I missed anyone)

Anyone, who has donated money to the **Regimental Society** and has not received a letter of acknowledgment **if applicable**, is requested to let me know.

At the time of going to press, we are missing some of our regular submissions but hopefully they will arrive in time for inclusion in this edition.

The input from readers for this edition was most encouraging for it makes my job a lot easier when that input is available. When I have to do fill-ins the material is not **Strathcona** flavoured and therefore not received with the same enthusiasm.

For the **Fall 2002** edition of the *Newsletter*, please forward your reports, letters, anecdotes, articles, photos, etc by the **15 Sep 2002**.

'Mucker' Langan

New E-mail Addresses
Association (Alberta Branch)
abbranch@strathconas.ca
Association (Ontario Branch)
strathconasontario@yahoo.ca

LAST TRUMPET CALL

KENDALL G.G. (George) WW2, age 84, 08 Dec 01, Ottawa, ON
MCCARTHY J.C. (John) WW2, Korea, Regular, age 74, 10 Jan 02, St John, NB
CLARK R.B.E. (Nobby) Regular, age 72, 04 Feb 02, Calgary, AB
MACEY C.N. (Chum) WW2, age 85, Feb 02, Winnipeg, MB
MADILL G.O. (Gord) Regular, age 74, 12 Oct 01, Dauphin, MB
NICOL J.I. (Jack) WW2, age 86, Jan 02, Victoria, BC
PICKERELL L.D. (Lenny) WW2, age 82, 04 Dec 01, Langley, BC
SAMBELL D. (Duane) Regular, age 70, 11 Jul 01, Calgary, AB
SAMPLE K.R. (Ken) WW2, age 80, 17 Sep 2001, Minnedosa, MB
SCRAMSTAD P.T. (Scrammy) WW2, age 80, 23 Feb 02, Kelowna, BC
SPENCER J.A. (Jim) WW2, age 86, 26 Oct 01, Mervin, SK
SPILE L. (Lloyd) WW2, age 78, 13 Dec 01, Provost, AB
TRESHAM D.A. (Don) Regular, age 67, 29 Dec 01, Ottawa, ON
WALTON A.E. (Wally) Regular, age 69, 24 Jan 02, Calgary, AB

In Loving Memory of Wives

CHILDS VI (Vic) 01 Dec 98, West Bank, BC
GOEBEL AGNES (Len) 21 May 01, Calgary, AB
LAMBKIN LILLIAN (Tom deceased) 02 June 01, Belmont, MB
MENU MARGARET (Paul deceased) 23 Dec 01, Calgary, AB
MOGG MARY (Andy) 17 May 01, West Bank, BC
WATTSFORD HELEN, (George) 13 April 01, Kingston, ON

"May They Rest in Peace"

(My apologies for lack of details in some cases. Ed)



Lost Trails

The following had their Fall 2000 *Newsletter* returned by Canada Post with the notation "MOVED". If any reader knows the current address or whereabouts of these individuals would you, or have them, notify this office:

Chris Eyres, Winnipeg, MB. **Padre Gingras**, Gatineau, QC. **Bert Mills**, Scarborough, ON. **Mary Perkins**, Clarksburg, ON. **Doctor Nicholas Rety**, Vernon, BC. **Colin Zwickler**, Parksville, BC. **Don Verge**, Halifax, NS. **Ken Dent**, Medicine Hat, AB. **J. Duggan**, Edmonton, AB. **Tom Williamson**, High River, AB. **"Punchy" Chant**, Picton, BC. **Laird Gordon**, Gloucester, ON. **Ed Hanson**, Lethbridge, AB. **Len Ledoux**, Saanichton, BC. **Bill McCulloch**, N. Vancouver, BC. **Lloyd McLean**, Parksville, BC. **Bert Mill**, Scarborough, ON. **Ron Paxton**, Brandon, MB. **Grant Pearson**, St Marys, ON. **Chris Rand**, Golden, BC. **Wayne Reinson**, Cremona, AB. **George Towell**, Andrew, AB. **"Poco" Wait**, Creston, BC. **Doreen Windsor**, Victoria, BC. In Calgary AB were **J. Curlook**, **Mrs. Jane Cook**, **Charles Harnett**, **Gord MacKay**, **Alex McIntosh**, **Mrs. Eleanor Robison**, **Duane Sambell**.