

THE/LE BULLETIN



President's Comments

By Léon Chamois, President

Commentaires du président

Par Léon Chamois, président de l'OMMC

As I write these words I am almost ready to start packing for Edmonton. I am excited to go there; I have never been personally and we have never been as an organization. Going to new places is important for OMMC because it means we are growing as an organization. Another proof of our growth is the number of people attending this year's course; we have not had such numbers in years. Our overall membership is growing as well. Our numbers are growing because of new members and because people and institutions that left us a few years ago are starting to return. I think that all these factors point to the fact that OMMC is indeed living up to its mandate to be the one voice speaking for Canada's military museum community. Recognition should be given to the directors, individuals and institutions who are working hard to make this happen.

All the flooding some parts of Canada have endured recently should be a reminder of how important disaster planning is.

Speaking of Edmonton, I know how much some of you are looking forward to our world famous historical quiz. Remember, most of the questions are taken from *Esprit de Corps* magazine.

See you all in Edmonton.

Au moment où j'écris ces mots, je suis presque prêt à faire mes bagages pour Edmonton. Je suis excité d'y aller; je n'ai jamais été personnellement et nous n'avons jamais été comme organisation. Se rendre à de nouveaux endroits est important pour l'OMMC car cela signifie que notre organisation se développe. Une autre preuve de notre croissance est le nombre de participants au cours de cette année; nous n'avons pas eu de tels chiffres depuis des années. Notre effectif global augmente également. Ce nombre augmente à cause des nouveaux membres et parce que les gens et les institutions qui nous ont quittés il y a quelques années commencent à revenir. Je pense que tous ces facteurs montrent que l'OMMC s'acquitte de son mandat, qui est d'être la voix unique de la communauté des musées militaires du Canada. Il convient de reconnaître les directeurs, les individus et les institutions qui travaillent d'arrache-pied pour que cela se produise.

Les inondations que certaines régions du Canada ont subies récemment devraient rappeler à quel point la planification en cas de catastrophe est importante.

En parlant d'Edmonton, je sais à quel point certains d'entre vous ont hâte de participer à notre célèbre quiz historique. N'oubliez pas que la plupart des questions proviennent du magazine *Esprit de Corps*.

On se voit tous à Edmonton.

The General Strange Medals Return to the Royal Regiment

By Andrew Oakden, Royal Canadian Artillery Museum

I am very pleased to announce the return of Major-General T. B. "Jingo" Strange's medals to the Royal Regiment. The RCA Museum has purchased the General Strange medals and brought them home. They arrived at our museum on 3 May 2019.

We purchased the medals at auction on 10 April 2019. The RCA Senate raised the funds for this acquisition. 100% of the funds used for the purchase came from private donations. I would like to thank the RCA Senate for raising the money for these historic medals. I would also like to thank everyone that gave funds or helped with this project. In addition, I would like to recognize the Colonel Commandant, Brig-Gen (Ret'd) J. J. Selbie, OMM, CD for leading the fundraising drive.

The Maj-Gen T. B. "Jingo" Strange medals are invaluable to the Royal Regiment. General Strange had many accomplishments. In 1872, he was the first Commandant of B Battery and served in this capacity for ten years. He helped found and transform the Post-Confederation Canadian militia. In 1885, Strange came out of retirement and commanded the Alberta Field Force during the North-West Rebellion. This force fought in the last battle on Canadian soil. Strange helped open up the West and was a larger-than-life figure in Canadian history. In 1925, he became the first Colonel Commandant of the Royal Regiment. Strange is the 'father of the Canadian artillery' and the first "Great Gunner." These facts make his military medals an exceptional acquisition.

The Royal Regiment and the RCA Museum will honor his legacy. In Shilo, we have General Strange Hall named after the great man, but there is little else in Canada to honor him. These medals help explain Canadian military history; a history that sometimes forgets its military heroes. His medals are evidence of his achievements and of our common heritage.



Photo of the Major-General T. B. Strange
Medals: Northwest Canada Medal 1885 & Indian
Mutiny Medal 1857-59.

We repatriated these medals to Canada. They will stay in Canada at our Regimental museum. We will also create a traveling exhibit featuring the great man and his medals. As new generations of Canadian Gunners come they will learn about the man and see his medals. We are very grateful to have these medals and we look forward to telling his story.

Retour des médailles du général Strange au Régiment royal

Par Andrew Oakden, Le Musée de l'Artillerie royale canadienne



Chuck LaRocque, président du conseil d'administration du Musée de l'ARC, et un soldat de la batterie B tiennent les médailles du général Strange lors du dévoilement.

Je suis très heureux d'annoncer le retour des médailles du major général T.B. « Jingo » Strange au Régiment royal. Le Musée de l'ARC a acheté les médailles du général Strange et les a rapportées au Canada. Elles sont arrivées au Musée le 3 mai 2019.

Elles ont été acquises aux enchères le 10 avril 2019. Le Sénat de l'ARC a recueilli les fonds nécessaires pour l'achat. La totalité des fonds utilisés pour l'achat venait de dons privés. Je désire remercier le Sénat de l'ARC d'avoir amassé les fonds pour ces médailles historiques. Je tiens également à remercier toutes les personnes qui ont fait un don ou qui ont participé à ce projet. De plus, je veux souligner les efforts déployés par le

colonel commandant, le Bgén (retraité) J.J.Selbie, OMM, CD, pour diriger cette campagne de financement.

Les médailles du Mgén T.B. « Jingo » Strange sont indispensables au Régiment royal. Le général Strange a cumulé de nombreux exploits. En 1872, il a été le premier commandant de la Batterie B, un poste qu'il a occupé pendant dix ans. Il a aidé à fonder et à transformer la milice canadienne après la Confédération. En 1885, il a quitté sa retraite pour assumer le commandement de la force de campagne de l'Alberta pendant la rébellion du Nord-Ouest. Cette force a combattu dans la dernière bataille en sol canadien. Il a aidé à ouvrir l'Ouest et était un personnage plus grand que nature dans l'histoire canadienne. En 1925, il est devenu le premier colonel commandant du Régiment royal. Il est le « père de l'Artillerie canadienne » et le premier « grand artilleur ». Ces médailles militaires constituent donc une acquisition exceptionnelle.

Le Régiment royal et le Musée de l'ARC lui rendront hommage. À Shilo, le General Strange Hall a été nommé en l'honneur de cet homme remarquable, mais c'est à peu près tout au Canada. Ces médailles aident à expliquer l'histoire militaire canadienne; une histoire qui oublie parfois ses héros militaires. Les médailles du général Strange témoignent de ses réalisations et de notre patrimoine commun.

Nous avons rapporté ces médailles au Canada. Elles seront conservées dans notre musée régimentaire. Nous mettrons également sur pied une exposition itinérante axée sur cet homme remarquable et ses médailles. Les nouvelles générations d'artilleurs canadiens auront l'occasion d'en apprendre à son sujet et de voir ses médailles. Nous sommes très reconnaissants de posséder ces médailles et nous sommes impatients de raconter son histoire.



‘Wirbelwind’: A Mowat Legacy Restoration

By Mark J. Proulx, Base Borden Military Museum

As a young Army cadet with the 1st Hussars, I recall many trips to CFB Borden and Worthington Tank Park, climbing on tanks that I had only ever seen in pictures. Home to the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps (RCAC), the static tank displays were every boys dream. Completing my Reserve Basic Training at Borden many years later gave me another chance to see and touch these historical treasures. Fast forward 35 years or so, and I find myself project managing the restoration of one of these rare vehicles, the Sd.Kfz. 161/4 Flakpanzer IV or *Wirbelwind*.



As one of the many pieces of equipment brought back from battle-scarred Europe by then-Captain Farley Mowat of the Intelligence Corp, this piece has stood outside at Borden, and has been subjected to the elements and souvenir hunters for the more than 70 years. At the behest of Captain (ret'd) Guy Despatie in 2016, the Base Borden Military Museum agreed to bring the old warrior inside and commit to restoring. This vehicle is one of only two remaining out of a production somewhere between only 87 and 103.

The ‘*Wirbelwind*’ was an attempt to provide mobile anti-aircraft support to units that offered a greater volume of fire than the single 2-centimetre gun mounted on towed trailers with no crew protection. The concept came about in the summer of 1944 from an officer named Krause in the 12.SS Panzer Division. Based on a Panzer IV chassis and mounting four 2-centimetre *Flakvierling* cannons, it offered a withering volume of fire and some crew protection, in addition to mobility. The open-topped turret housed the Gunner/Commander and two Loaders with the Driver and Radio/MG operator in the usual hull positions.

Our vehicle was found in an equipment collection point somewhere near Bremen, Germany. There is evidence of significant damage and repairs, but we cannot determine what configuration the vehicle was in when it was hit. During the tear down, numerous wartime artifacts were recovered such as a live 2-centimetre round, a Swastika emblazoned coin, as well as US .30 calibre ammunition. Each of these items point to a piece of a story we are eager to learn more about.

There exists precious little information as to what unit markings it would have had, not to mention where it saw action. We will apply a three-colour camouflage pattern as was seen in Normandy in 1944. Incredibly, there are remnants of the original ‘*Zimmerit*’ anti-magnetic paste on the hull which we will recreate and re-apply. Internally, the vehicle was in desperate shape. Years of rain, snow, animals, and people have ruined all but the hardest components. The engine is extensively damaged and will require many hours and a large amount of funding, if it can be restored at all. That said, our incredible team of volunteers, specifically Rob Hall, is bringing this special vehicle back to life, literally, one piece at a time. To learn more about this project and others being led by our team, please check out our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/FlakpanzerRestorationProject/> or by emailing us at bordenmuseumvolunteers@gmail.com.

6 FES Museum Shares a Veteran's Experiences

By Jerry Silva, 6 FES Museum

On 17 January 2019, the 6 Field Engineer Squadron (FES) Museum held what we hope is the first of many outreach events.

Through the efforts of the Honorary Colonel, we became aware of a Second World War Sapper officer's family who wanted to know more about what their father, grandfather and great grandfather did during his service with 16 Field Company Royal Canadian Engineers (RCE) during the Second World War. Both 6 Field Company and 16 Field Company were part of 3 Division and thus would have many experiences in common.



Fifteen members of Lt. Weymark's family visited the unit at 6:00 p.m. Vince Larocque and Jerry Silva prepared and presented a slide presentation and talk on what Lt. Weymark would have experienced during his service during the Second World War. The 40-minute presentation was followed with a visit to the museum where Vince's bridging dioramas and other memorabilia brought home Lt. Weymark's experiences. Discussions and questions by the very interested guests continued until almost 9:00 p.m. The presentation was very much appreciated by family members who also were completely unaware of our unit's existence.



Jerry Silva will be participating in other outreach initiatives. The unit has hosted City Council and senior staff and briefed them on the armoury and the unit, and 6 FES Museum helps with preparations for this outreach.

A New Home for Fenian Raids Artifact

Major (Ret'd) John Stephens, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Regimental Museum

On 2 June 1866, 35-year-old, newly-promoted Ensign Malcolm McEachren helped lead No. 5 Company of The Queen's Own Rifles (QOR) of Canada into battle against invading Fenian Americans. The Irish nationalists, most of whom were veterans of the American Civil War, hoped to hold Canadian colonies hostage in return for Irish independence. In contrast, members of the militias of the United Province of Canada had never seen combat before. However, they immediately responded to the call to arms and left their homes to defend their country. This would be the first battle fought entirely by Canadians and led by Canadian officers.



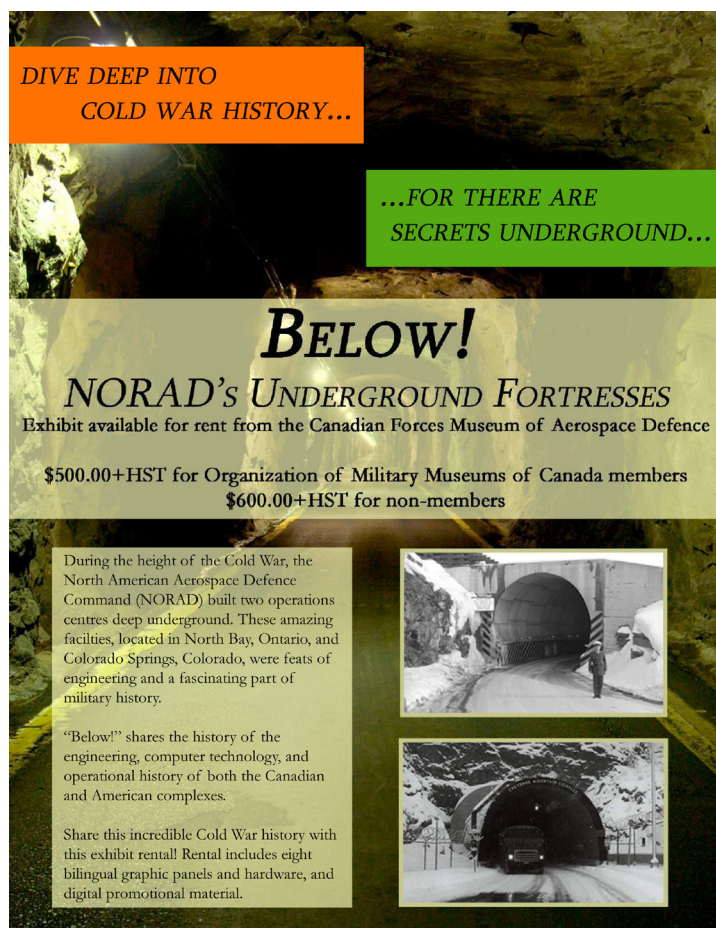
Although outnumbered and poorly supplied, the Canadians engaged the Fenians effectively for over an hour before the senior officer ordered the troops to form hollow square after a cry of "cavalry." The mistake was quickly realized but attempts to reform line led to confusion among the inexperienced soldiers still under fire from the enemy, and despite the best efforts of the officers, the troops retired from the field back to Port Colborne.

Despite the rather ignominious end to the Battle of Ridgeway, the Fenians realized that the Canadians were not going to embrace them as the liberators, but rather put up much more resistance than anticipated. Knowing that more forces were approaching from the north, they fled back across the Niagara River to Buffalo, leaving behind an estimated 14 dead. The QOR lost 30 soldiers total, killed in action or dying later from their wounds.

The first to fall in battle that day was Ensign McEachren, shot through in the abdomen and dying shortly after being carried from the field. He would be the first of thousands of QOR soldiers to make the ultimate sacrifice in South Africa, the First and Second World Wars, Korea, Cyprus, and in service-related accidents.

The tunic that McEachren wore that day was presented by one of his daughters to two officers to care for, and eventually it found its way into the collection of Old Fort Erie. During the 100th anniversary of the 1866 battle, the tunic was presented to the QOR and eventually became part of the Regimental Museum's collection. Over the course of more than 150 years, the tunic had suffered from light exposure and insect damage, and the exhibit case we've had it in was hardly effective at minimizing these hazards – in fact it was old enough to be an artefact itself!

In 2016, the regiment was saddened at the death of CWO Scott Patterson who was very much the keeper of regimental traditions and history. However, a generous bequest from his estate allowed us to purchase a much needed, custom made, museum quality exhibit case – frameless UV filtering glass, air tight sealing and lockable door, and humidity control chamber. We have now taken steps to ensure the preservation of this significant artefact in the future. On 25 April 2019 we held a cocktail reception to unveil this new case – which was done by CWO Patterson's siblings and the executor of his estate. We also had on temporary display some recent acquisitions and interesting objects not normally on exhibit.



**DIVE DEEP INTO
COLD WAR HISTORY...**

**...FOR THERE ARE
SECRETS UNDERGROUND...**

BELOW!

NORAD's UNDERGROUND FORTRESSES

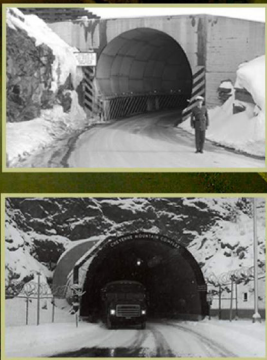
Exhibit available for rent from the Canadian Forces Museum of Aerospace Defence

\$500.00+HST for Organization of Military Museums of Canada members
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During the height of the Cold War, the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) built two operations centres deep underground. These amazing facilities, located in North Bay, Ontario, and Colorado Springs, Colorado, were feats of engineering and a fascinating part of military history.

"Below!" shares the history of the engineering, computer technology, and operational history of both the Canadian and American complexes.

Share this incredible Cold War history with this exhibit rental! Rental includes eight bilingual graphic panels and hardware, and digital promotional material.



Below! NORAD's Underground Fortresses

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For more details, contact
Curatorial Assistant Bethany Aitchison at
Bethany.Aitchison@forces.gc.ca or
705-494-2011 ext 2256

Ci-Dessous! Les forteresses souterraines du NORAD

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la défense aérospatiale des Forces canadiennes

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Bethany Aitchison, Conservatrice adjointe à
Bethany.Aitchison@forces.gc.ca ou
705-494-2011 ext 2256

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leon.chamois@forces.gc.ca
annie.lindsay50@yahoo.ca
ommcinc2@gmail.com
richarderuggle@gmail.com

bethany.aitchison@live.ca
Mor-curator@telusplanet.net
greggallant@pei.sympatico.ca
juddal@pacificcoast.net
eric.ruel@museedufortsaintjean.ca
tasconab@mymts.net
grant.tyler@pc.gc.ca
stuart.beaton@forces.gc.ca

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The editor is Bethany Aitchison. Articles can be submitted to bethany.aitchison@live.ca.