



RCMI

ROYAL CANADIAN MILITARY INSTITUTE

Members' News

"Contains NO Artificial Intelligence"

Remembrance Dinner 2025 presented by the Last Post Fund

Admiral Mark Norman: "Oh look, a War Person"



Each year the RCMI and the Last Post Fund hold a fundraising dinner for the honourable burial of indigent Canadian veterans. Our speaker this year was retired Vice Admiral Mark Norman, who addressed us on the state of the World, Canada, the Forces and Everything. 🍁

Watch the video [here](#).

Adam Saunders, Pres LPF Ontario, VAdm (Ret'd) Mark Norman, Cmdre Michael J. Barefoot, Commandant, CFC, Mrs. Kaitlin Brulotte, Dr. Bryan Brulotte, Major the Rev. Canon Don McLean Aitchison, Jim Colley District Deputy Grand Master Toronto Don Valley District

Rear Row, L to R: Piper Jeff David, Toronto Fire Services, BGen Dave Patterson, Colonel Commandant of The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, LCol Mike Clarry, Past President & Executive Director of the RCMI





From the President

I have been accused of excessive preoccupation with the current US political reality. But it is difficult to look away from a country whose administration would destroy our economy, plunder our natural resources, seize our territory, and make us the 51st state in the American flag. We have a patriotic duty as Canadians to oppose such misguided ideas and to identify and resist those who are promoting them. We are not Americans.

We are Canadians. And we need to demonstrate that every day.

It is difficult to talk about the threat of the US to Canada, when so much of our history together has been amicable and allied against common enemies. And it is especially difficult to conceive that the US is being torn apart internally by what may be emerging as a new Civil War, possibly more disruptive than the last one from 1861 to 1865, when some 700,000 Americans died.

We need to take a moment to reflect on the misery of our US families and friends who are currently caught up in vicious inter-party warfare. This conflict is fuelled by an amazingly ignorant and inept US President and his minions, all more concerned with personal enrichment, personal retribution and personal vendettas than with the welfare of their nation. If you want confirmation, read their daily utterances and follow their daily outrages, or watch the President's pathetic address to the nation, filled with falsehoods, December 17th. I have never seen a US president referred to as a psychopath, a sociopath, a racist, a bully, a misogynist, and a malevolent narcissist. It seems almost impossible that all these traits should be present in the same man. But they appear to be, to the utter shame of the United States in national and international arenas. In these challenging times, I wonder if Americans could have a worse leader than they do now.

Americans are suffering under this misguided and unpopular administration. How many millions of them must go hungry or be denied affordable health care coverage before Republicans finally see the light of reason? How many will lose their jobs, not on performance but on pure partisanship? How swift will the decline of America be if the US continues along this one-way path to oblivion? It need not face determined foreign enemies; it is quite busy destroying itself from within even without their intervention. Russia and China must be rejoicing every day at the confusion and havoc demonstrated by the President and his cult.

What will happen to Canada in a new world dominated by Russia and China, both prepared to use their massive military might to defeat their many perceived enemies? If the US is not available to support us in military alliances against our foes - and there are growing indications that it will not be - who will? It is a challenging time for Canadians, and an indication of US party warfare, when Hilary Clinton awards the US President for his stance on the Ukraine "The Neville Chamberlain award for betraying peace, freedom and justice." Have we learned nothing since World War II about the failures of appeasement and the enabling of despots?

Canadians can be roused to resistance in defence of their national interests. Remember what an aroused Canada looks like. November was a time for sober reflection by millions of Canadians on the wartime sacrifices that Canadian military, naval, air, and Coast Guard elements have made in the interests of peace since the beginning of the twentieth Century. Our war effort in defence of democracy and against the forces of authoritarianism and dictatorship has been among the strongest of all Western nations. 66,000 Canadians died in the Great War and 170,000 were wounded of the 650,000 who served (population of Canada 8.1 million). 45,000 Canadians died in World War Two and 55,000 were wounded of the 1.1 million who served (population 12.1 million). Our strategic importance to the Allied war effort was critical to its triumph. When the RCMI laid its wreaths at the Cenotaph outside City Hall in Toronto



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and at Queen's Park on Remembrance Day, we indeed remembered our fallen. As we should, now and always.

It is said that history, ignored, repeats itself, We shall see. And we must stand by to protect ourselves while we observe. We are already closing ranks against the stupidity of the US Administration's leaders, so many supremely unqualified for their current positions. The Globe and Mail put it last August that "The Canadianization is happening on many levels. We've never seen anything like it. It's happening on the economy, on trade diversification, on military spending, on culture with our changed travel and purchasing practices, and on alliance-building abroad." And it will continue. The US Administration may not like it, but we are showing the kind of resistance that an aroused Canada can muster.

So when the US Ambassador to Canada talks now about the anti-tariff ads - put out in the US by Ontario - as Canadian interference in US elections (dismissing the unjustified interference of the US Administration's sanctions on our economy), it reveals a profound misunderstanding of what motivates Canadians every day. Quite simply, the leading lights of the US Administration do not understand us. I doubt that they ever will. In their insecurity and ignorance they dismiss us, as they do so many international authorities, because it requires too much effort to appreciate us. Canadians who served alongside Americans in two great world wars and in UN operations after World War II will wonder what happened to the spirit of our American comrades who once fought with us in the common pursuit of peace.

The current Administration misfits and flunkies know that much of their domestic agenda is tanking. So, to deflect public attention away from their failures, they invent foreign aggression and an over-hyped response to it, talking about annexing Greenland, or the Panama Canal, or subjugating Canada, or invading Nigeria, or Venezuela, or Cuba, or forcing the Ukraine to accept outrageous Russian terms for "peace", or imposing impractical controls on the Middle East. Shameful and embarrassing for the US, and a blow to its international standing. These US Administration flunkies will spend the rest of their lives atoning for their current mistakes; but their redemption will never come. They will watch in their rear-view mirrors for the dust cloud of approaching historians, knowing that their reputations will be destroyed with the passage of time, and that they will be excoriated as true enemies of America.

It is a relief to turn from the machinations, misstatements and misfits of the US administration to the recent activities of the RCMI. In the past few weeks, we have been privileged to host HRH Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, in a luncheon with the True Patriot Love Association. We have also been honoured with a visit by an important delegation from the National Defence University of Ukraine, speaking on conditions in that beleaguered country. Both these events were restricted in



attendance for security reasons and could not be promoted widely among the membership. We regret that, but recognize the growing profile of the RCMI among a wide range of military and civilian groups. In the case of the Ukrainian delegation it was inspiring to hear from individuals fighting actively to preserve their country against Russian aggression. They set an example for others to follow.

We also were privileged to host on Remembrance Day a series of presentations on aspects of the RCMI Museum presented by CHCH-TV, broadcast from the Library. Some of you will have viewed these well-done short vignettes. And, in what may have been the first time that a play was

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Kevin d'Entremont	Kanata, Ontario
Mr. Christopher Gunther	Toronto, Ontario
Dr. Neil E. Gibson, OMM, CD	Edmonton, Alberta
Mr. Val Matisons	Gananoque, Ontario
Sgt-at-Arms Patrick E. McDonnell	Ottawa, Ontario
Mr. Grant E. McGlaughlin	Flesherton, Ontario
Mr. Douglas S. Ruggles	Cobourg, Ontario
Lt Eric Schultz Reichrath	Ottawa, Ontario
HCapt(N) Jeanette Southwood	Ottawa, Ontario
Maj Paul A. Thompson, CD	Toronto, Ontario
Dr. Christopher Triantafilou	Waterloo, Ontario
Mr. Edwin G. Upenieks	Mono, Ontario
2Lt William D. Wainwright, CD	North York, Ontario
S/Sgt John Whitworth	White Rock, British Columbia
The Hon Jeffrey T. Yurek	St. Thomas, Ontario

WARM WELCOME BACK

Ms Naomi K. Irizawa	Toronto, Ontario
<i>In Memoriam</i>	
Mr. Ian J. D. Gray	Nottawa, Ontario Non-Resident Member
Mr. Andrew M. Gunn	Toronto, Ontario Resident Member

Continued on page 4



General Manager's Corner

Just a quick note this month to wish you all a Happy New Year and welcome back to the RCMI!

On behalf of the staff and management team, I would like to thank our members that donated to the Staff Christmas Fund. Despite the cost of living increasing daily and a lot of economic uncertainty ahead, you kindly gave to our staff. Please know your generosity was appreciated immensely by all and I'm sure it was put to good use during the holiday season.

For those of you who were able to attend the AGM in November, or join us virtually, you would have heard that despite a significant shortfall in Private Event and Bedroom bookings, both significant revenue streams for Services, we managed to achieve a net excess at the end of the fiscal year. This was mainly due to prudent expense management by the team.

As I write this article, unfortunately we are experiencing many of the same trends this fall and holiday season. While our annual Christmas luncheons and other Member events have been well attended, we again saw fewer than expected Private Events (mainly corporate) in the months of October, November and December, which in the past, have been our busiest times. The economy continues to impact discretionary spending. Our team will continue our efforts to encourage repeat bookings and take other initiatives to drum up business, and your referrals are appreciated! We will see how our Q2 numbers look, and I shall report back to the members in due time with an update.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our management team and employees for their hard work in 2025. I am grateful to have a group dedicated to making the Institute a place we are all proud of daily. They remain loyal, despite the many challenges we continue to face, and it is a pleasure and honour to work with such a great group of people!

Just a reminder of the upcoming specials and events you can look forward to enjoying in the upcoming months:

- January 7 to 31—Half Priced Desserts (with Main/Handhelds)
- January 24—Robbie Burns Dinner and Dance
- February 13 & 14—Valentine's Day Specials
- March 17—St. Patrick's Day Specials

As always, I encourage members to let me know how we are doing. With our focus on improving our member dining experience and value proposition, we need your ongoing feedback to ensure we are on the right track! Please call or email me anytime, or better yet, stop by the office for a conversation. 🍀

—Garrett Wright

President's Column

performed live at the RCMI, we were graced with two performances of *Bluebirds*, centering on the horrors of the Great War as seen through the eyes of three heroic Canadian nurses.

There are a host of interesting events and speakers forthcoming in 2026 from the Defence and Securities Studies Committee speakers, including a Symposium; the Military History Nights programme; the Museum Committee speakers, Symposium, and Auction; prominent speaker presentations, including CDS General Jennie Carignan and Bob Rae, recently Canada's Ambassador to the UN; and others, including several book launches. We will also be arranging an exhibition of selected military portraits by the RCMI's war artist, Gertrude Kearns, recently shown in the Canadian Embassy in Washington. Check

the Events Calendar at RCMI.org and Eric's refrigerator magnet of events for developments and updates. We have recently formed a Programme & Events Committee to help us manage the increasing flow of event ideas and logistics as these expand. Remember that we rely on your attendance and participation to keep these coming!

Early in the New Year we will be welcoming the return of the Red Baron artifacts to the Long Bar after months of comprehensive conservation treatment. Watch for further details re an opening ceremony. And our new Ottawa and Kingston chapters are planning some interesting events in 2026 for members and prospects. Stay tuned! 🍀

—Bill Hines, President



Our Christmas luncheon buffet was a smash hit. Here's Chef Wiktor with Kathirvel left, Jonathan right, turkey beside Santa.

The 135th Annual General Meeting of the RCMI

The 135th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Canadian Military Institute took place on November 27, 2025, with numerous dedicated and engaged members in attendance.

President Bill Hines of the Institute acted as Chair and Vice President Carl Noll as Acting Secretary for this meeting.

Key Highlights

Appointment of Officers for 2025-2026: The following individuals were appointed as officers for the upcoming year: **President:** William Hines, **Vice President:** Craig Hannaford, **2nd Vice President:** Carl Noll, **Executive Director:** Michael Clarry, **Honorary Solicitor:** Jacques Demers, **Secretary:** James Lutz, **General Manager:** Garrett Wright, **Controller:** Elena Trouba. **Election of New Board Members:** The following individual was newly elected to the Board by RCMI members: **Bradley J. Bozek:** Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Retired.

Re-elected Board members include Carl Noll, Craig Hannaford, William Hines, Barbara Hodder, Adrienne McLennan, Robert Hamilton, David Collins, and Mark Watson. Executive Director Michael Clarry and Secretary James Lutz will continue in their roles.

Financial Reporting: Edmund Leong, CPA, CA, of Tator, Rose & Leong, presented the auditor's report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

In Memoriam: Past President Michael Clarry and current Executive Director led a moment of silence to honour the 11 RCMI members who passed away in the past year. Their contributions and presence will be deeply missed.

Closing Remarks: The 135th Annual General Meeting exemplified the resilience and dedication of the RCMI and its members throughout history, including times of war, reconstruction, and global challenges. The Institute extends its gratitude to its members for their unwavering involvement and support.

Chair's Remarks and Highlights: Membership remains steady. The Board of Directors has pursued numerous activities and ideas and continues to do so. RCMI Chapters in Kingston and Ottawa have been activity involved.

Shared Services with Condominium continue to work in partnership.

Thanks to Directors, Executive and staff for their participation and enthusiasm in supporting our members. 🍁

—Carl Noll, Acting Secretary

The full Minutes may be obtained from Susan Cook

The 2025 'Hammy' Award

THE WING COMMANDER Hamilton E. Boulter Editorial Award, fondly known as the "Hammy", was created in 1975 by the late Wing-Commander Hamilton E. Boulter, ED, (Past President 1953-54), for the best article in the then-new Yearbook, published from 1971 to 1994. The Award lapsed between 1994 and 2003 and it was not until 2001 that the original vision was realized in the form of the SITREP we know today. In 2004, the Boulter Award competition was reinstated. Here are this year's winners:

1st Place—The True North Strong and Free: A Critique of Canada's Liberal Foreign Policy, by Steve Desotti, Vol 85, No 1

2nd Place—AUKUS, *shifting alliance dynamics, and Canada* by William Richardson, Vol 84, No 5

3rd Place (Tie)—*On Our Own: Canadian Security and Prosperity in 2025* by Simon Waring, Vol 84, No 6

3rd Place (Tie)—*The Battlefield's Terrifying New Threat* by Christopher Banks, Vol 84, No 6

The responsibility for choosing the annual winner of the Boulter rests with the Library Committee and its stalwart Chair James McReynolds. The plaques, now two, hang in the Library.

This year's Award Panel included James McReynolds and James Wilson.

It is wonderful to note that this year's award winners include two members of the DSSP Committee (Simon and Chris), as well as one of my former students at CFC, Steve.

—Dr. Daniel D. Eustace, CD, PhD
Chair, RCMI Defence and Security
Studies Program and Editor, SITREP

Your 2025-2026 Board of Directors

Brad Bozek, Jacques Demers, Mike Clarry,
David Collins, Craig Hannaford, Bill Hines,
Carl Noll, Robert Hamilton,
Garrett Wright.

In the vignettes: Adrienne McLennan,
Barbara Hodder, Mark Watson



Remembrance Day at the RCMi



VP Craig Hannaford lays the wreath at the Cenotaph. Carl Noll laid a wreath at Queen's Park. Centre—The Toronto Scottish paraded at Mississauga City Hall. Right—the Limber Gunners of 7 Toronto Regiment at Queen's Park.

A Visit from the National Defence University of Ukraine

On December 9, the RCMi hosted a visit by the National Defence University of Ukraine (NDUU) to exchange lessons from the Russia-Ukraine war across communications, land operations, NCO development, logistics, air defence, resilience, and veteran recovery. The delegation consisted of: Col Iryna Izhutova, faculty; Vasyl Shvalyuchynskyi, Deputy Head of the State Military Management Institute; Senior Master-Sergeant Roman Kuzmenko, Director of Non-Commissioned Officer's Leadership Course; Col Yuriy Hannenko, Faculty; Col Oleg Radko, faculty; Capt Viktor Derevianko, faculty; Dr. Nataliia Zaretska, faculty. For security reasons, attendance was restricted to the Board, the Defence and Security Studies Committee, and the NATO Association of Canada.

The presentations emphasized the importance of allied support, while highlighting that Ukraine is also sharing battlefield insights and updated practices through Lessons Learned. On all matters and capabilities discussed, delegates noted a significant shift from limited state-level capability prior to 2014, to more developed structures in response to the occupation of Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine since 2014, with the full-scale invasion in 2022 becoming a test for the newly established structures and a catalyst for further development and integration with NATO systems.

In strategic communications, since 2022 the information environment has been treated as a full operational domain. The state and armed forces have formalized crisis communications routines and broadened credible messengers beyond only official spokespeople, recognizing that non-official voices can increase resonance, speed, and trust when aligned with verified facts. Russia's information effort was characterized as long-running and adaptive, including disruption of traditional broadcasting, exploitation of degraded connectivity, and heavy use of social platforms (especially Telegram). The challenge highlighted was balancing reach and responsiveness with verification, counter-disinformation workflows, and audience media



literacy.

On land warfare, participants described a transformation away from Soviet-era approaches toward NATO-aligned operations and more flexible leadership practices. The scale of force generation has grown dramatically since 2022. However, challenges of trainings persist due to the need to integrate a mix of modern systems. Allied cooperation and training were noted as critical, not only for skills transfer, but also for interoperability, standardization, and accelerating adaptation cycles.



On NCO development, while initial efforts predate 2014, the post-2014 reform period was described as critical, with NATO curricula and partner missions helping to build institutional architecture. The full-scale invasion led to the dispersion of training institutions as training sites became targets. Courses were paused and then re-established in concealed or protected facilities, and instructors had to self-adapt to frequently changing weapon equipment. Another noted shift was the evolving officer—NCO relationships toward more NCO-led small-unit execution and more collaborative decision-making (the traditional Soviet military had no professional NCO corps).

On logistics, speakers framed it as an end-to-end planning and control “science,” aligned with NATO approaches and structured supply categories, from food and fuel to equipment, construction materials, and ammunition, aimed at sustaining

combat power while minimizing friction and cost.

On air defence and the air war, the delegation emphasized rapid adaptation to mass missile and drone strikes (including attacks on energy infrastructure), and the integration of international systems enabled by partner collaboration. Discussion covered evolving Russian tactics and Ukrainian counter-adaptation and the growing centrality of UAVs.

On national resilience, the conversation emphasized societal will to fight, civic identity and cohesion, and the outsized role of volunteer networks that filled capability gaps quickly. The group also touched on mobilization and training reforms, as well as the economic dimension of resilience (surviving major shocks through internal adaptation and external support).

On veteran recovery and reintegration, the session highlighted lessons learned on supporting those released from captivity, treating reintegration as both a human imperative and a strategic necessity. Recovered individuals can contribute to military or civilian service, help society understand the adversary realistically without spreading trauma, and provide insight into hostile hybrid techniques intended to destabilize communities.

The session proceeded to a lively discussion moderated by Col Howard Coombs. Everyone present was much moved by the knowledge that some of our guests would be circulating back into active combat roles on their return home.

Slava Ukraini/Geroyam slava! 🍁

—Bogdana Torbina

Chief of Staff, NATO Association of Canada

Valentine's Day Specials
FEBRUARY 13 & 14

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The German Command and Staff College visits the NATO Association



ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, the NATO Association of Canada hosted the German Command and Staff College Delegation Seminar 2025 to share a Canadian perspective on transatlantic relations with strong emphases on the value of education and prospective opportunities for the future.

Lana Kharlip, MPA moderated the panel featuring expert speakers including LCol (Ret'd) Ted Opitz, NATO Association Director and Former MP; Professor Jack Cunningham, Coordinator of the Bill Graham Centre; Indira Naidoo-Harris, NATO Association Director and Former Ontario Minister of Education. 🍁

—BT

Military History Nights *organized by James Ellis*

November 19: “U.S. Special Forces Commando”— The continuing saga of Leif Bangsbøll with Brook Bangsbøll

BROOK BANGSBØLL RETURNS with the second half of his father’s biography, describing the end of the war and what happened after he was recalled to active service, including undercover ops in the Soviet sector of Berlin. By popular demand, the episodes ‘Hitler’s Birthday’ and ‘Sophia’ were also repeated. 🍁

*The video of the lecture can be viewed on the
‘RCMI Toronto’ channel of YouTube [here](#)*



Derwin Mak’s Halloween Special

DICTATORS FIGHT ABOUT THE STRANGEST THINGS. Almost every country has a lake monster (Canada has a bunch), but some are definitely weirder than others and most create no jurisdictional issues.

WHO owns the Monster of Lake Paektu, China or North Korea?? Inquiring minds want to know—and we found out, as Derwin once again led us into the arcane, the weird, and the geopolitical! 🍁



The audience is fully engaged in rapt
and/or bemused attention.

Coming up!

Wednesday January 14th—Defence and
Security Studies with Andrew McGregor

Wednesday January 28th—Member and
Son Night with Ian MacKinnon

Friday February 6th—The Afghanistan
Luncheon (TBC)

Wednesday, February 11th—Military
History Night with Scott Anderson

Thursday, February 26—Dinner for the
Chief of Defence Staff,
Gen Jennie Carignan

Current Events Luncheons with Matt Gurney *organized by Eric Morse*

WE ARE SADDENED TO ANNOUNCE that owing to a serious family emergency, Matt has been forced to withdraw from the remainder of his Current Events Luncheon Series for 2026.

We extend our love and sympathy to Matt and his family and with them our wishes for hope and healing in the New Year

You can still watch Matt and Jenn Gerson spar with each other and anyone else in range on their podcasts at [The Line](#). 🍁



Bluebirds take flight

On Saturday, November 15, the Otter Room was transformed into a live theatre space. A production of *Bluebirds* was staged by the actors and crew of Theatre Burlington. *Bluebirds* tells the story of three Canadian nurses on the front lines during World War One. Amid the devastation of the Great War, nurses—Christy, Maggie, and Bab—have travelled across the Atlantic to care for the wounded. As the front line creeps closer to their field hospital, they find strength in each other and the lives they touch.

Canadian Nursing Sisters experienced significant losses in World War I, with many dying from a combination of enemy action, disease, and accidents. A notable cause of death was the sinking of the hospital ship HMS *Llandoverly Castle* by a German U-boat, which killed all 14 nursing sisters aboard in 1918. Other losses occurred from direct enemy attacks, such as the bombing of hospitals, and from illness, including the Spanish flu. *Bluebirds* highlights the bravery, dedication and compassion of Canadian Nursing Sisters.

Acclaimed playwright Vern Thiessen, was in attendance at the matinee performance and fielded questions from the audience afterwards. Thiessen has written for stage, radio, and television. His plays tackle ethical conundrums and conflicts on a personal and political level—from the moral repercussions of the eternal triangle to the consequences of the invention of chlorine gas and splitting the atom. He has said of his writing that the playwright must have the courage to put lead characters that he likes in the worst possible situations that bring out their humanity; they incur great loss and experience great hope.

This is certainly the case with *Bluebirds*!

Thiessen commented, “It was an honour to have my play presented by such a venerable institution as the RCMI. I was so well treated by everyone and the production by Theatre Burlington was excellent at keeping alive the memory of the three nurses who made the ultimate sacrifice.”

Two shows were performed to very appreciative audiences. In addition, there was a “talk back” with the actors after each show. They relayed how impactful *Bluebirds* was to them.

Two audience members offered their thoughts after the play:

“The entire evening was wonderful. The play; its immense impact emanating from such an intimate set. The acting; a trio of such capable actors. The audience; engaged from start to impactful end.”

“Heartbreaking but hopeful. Loved the beach scenes that showcased the blossoming friendship between the three women, bonded by empathy, sisterhood and shared trauma. Learned plenty about the heroism of the Bluebirds in WW1!”

Special thanks to RCMI member Kathryn Langley-Hope who was the sponsor for this production. Kathryn’s mother was a military nurse herself which added to the impact and special meaning of this production at the RCMI. 🍁

—CH



Christy, Maggie and Bab pledge eternal loyalty to each other

Playwright, cast, and crew with sponsor Kathryn Langley Hope and organizer Craig Hannaford.

Ghosts of the CEF



The Ghosts of the CEF have lunch at the RCMI. These fine fellows are re-enactors from Toronto police and fire services and the 48th Highlanders, along with other reservists and a few civilians. They spent the day in three areas of Toronto representing soldiers who did not make it home from the First World War. They carried baseball-style cards to hand anyone who asked them questions, because they were not to speak. They were silently returning home from the fields of France and Flanders where they fell. 🍁

—AS

The 2025 Santa Claus Parade



Photos by JojoFun and Adam Saunders

*As there can obviously not be two Santas
in one place, The Grinch was called
in to sub...*



Neville Poy's 90th Birthday Celebration



— PHOTOGRAPHER JONES HO

On October 29 long-time (20 years) Member Neville Poy celebrated his 90th birthday at RCMI with his family.

Standing Left to Right—in the back, Daphne Poy, April Poy, Justin Poy, Courtney Poy, Carter Poy, Nina Lin. Seated—Neville and retired Senator the Honourable Vivienne Poy. 🍁

ANNUAL
ROBBIE BURNS
DINNER AND DANCE

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24

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Celebrate the anniversary of Scotland's most famous bard and songwriter's 266th birthday.
Enjoy a traditional Scottish fest, haggis, a wee dram, bagpipes and a night of dancing
with our live band, "Fiddlestix".

Sidney Langford Hinde: A Note on a Forgotten Canadian in the Scramble for Africa

by Andrew McGregor

In the histories of the great 19th century “Scramble for Africa,” Canada is rarely, if ever, mentioned. The young nation had no colonial designs on Africa, but was still part of the British Empire, which was battling its European neighbours and African resistance movements for control of vast regions of the continent. It was inevitable, then, that some Canadians would become involved in this struggle, though not all worked in British interests.

Among those Canadians who distinguished themselves in British service in Africa were Toronto’s Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Charles Denison, who commanded the Canadian voyageurs on the Nile in 1884-1885; Montreal’s Lieutenant Raymond de Montmorency, who earned a VC at the Battle of Omdurman in 1898 before his death at the Battle of Stormberg in South Africa two years later; and RMC graduate Sir Édouard Percy Cranwill Girouard, of Montreal, who built a military railway across the Sudanese desert that permitted the movement of the Egyptian and British armies south to Omdurman to defeat the Mahdist forces of Khalifa ‘Abd Allahi in 1898.

Others, however, found themselves part of the international group of mercenary officers serving King Leopold II of Belgium in the king’s private African possession, the Congo Free State (1885-1908). The task of these officers, mostly Belgian, was to expand and consolidate King Leopold’s massive estate, often at the expense of British competitors. The best known of the Canadians in Leopold’s employ was Halifax’s William Grant Stairs, an RMC graduate who travelled 5000 miles across Africa in Henry Morton Stanley’s Emin Pasha Relief Expedition (1887-1889). He then led his own expedition to mineral-rich Katanga (1891-1892), seizing this region for the Congo Free State by killing King Msiri, the local potentate.

A lesser known but important Canadian-born contributor to the establishment of the Congo Free State was Dr. Sidney Langford Hinde. Hinde was born somewhere in the Niagara region on July 23, 1863, the son of Irish surgeon Major-General George L. Hinde. Educated in France and Germany, Hinde followed his father’s medical career, working in London hospitals before taking service with Leopold’s Congo Free State in 1892. Fluent in French, Hinde was recommended by Irish physician and British Army officer Thomas Heazle Parke, doctor on Henry Morton Stanley’s Emin Pasha Relief Expedition (1887-1889).

When Hinde joined the Free State military, Arab-led Mahdists controlled the Sudan and were pressing south into the Congo region, while Omani-origin Arabs had turned Zanzibar into a base for expansion into east and central Africa. A *Spectator* article of 1897 portrayed a struggle between Whites and Arabs for Africa: “The White has been fighting the Arab at Dongola, on the Congo, on the Lakes, on the East Coast, and even at Zanzibar itself.”

Britain’s Royal Navy had been active in trying to suppress the shipment of slaves from the African coast to the Middle East since 1822, with varying levels of success. Arab clove plantations in Zanzibar relied on the labour of thousands of Black slaves. In 1873 the British forced Zanzibar’s Omani rulers to abandon the slave trade, though it continued on the mainland.

The most powerful of the slavers in eastern Africa was the Arab/Swahili Tippu Tip (Hamad bin Muhammad bin Juma bin Rajab al-Murjabi), who at one point maintained personal ownership of 10,000 slaves on his Zanzibar plantations. In the mid-1880s, Tippu Tip claimed the eastern Congo for himself and the Sultan of Zanzibar. It was Tippu’s son Sefu bin Hamad who led the Arab slavers at the time of Hinde’s service in the Congo during the Congo-Arab War (1892-1894). Sefu’s partner was Rumliza (Muhammad bin Khalfan bin Khamis al-Barwani), a powerful Omani/Swahili trader in slaves and ivory. He was famous for inventing depraved tortures, too gruesome to be discussed here.

Andrew McGregor is director of Toronto-based Aberfoyle International Security (AIS). He received a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto’s Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations in 2000 and is a former Research Associate of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs and director of the Global Terrorism Analysis Program of the Washington DC-based Jamestown Foundation. Andrew’s publications include two books, several monographs and over 800 analytical articles on international military and security issues (see archives at <http://www.aberfoylesecurity.com/>).

He will be our first Defence and Security Studies speaker on January 14, 2026.



Sidney Langford Hinde wearing his Congo decorations.

The conflict was touched off by a dispute between Belgians and Arabs over ivory, not slaves, but for political purposes it was quickly recast in Europe as a Christian anti-slavery crusade, though Free State columns usually included large numbers of slaves belonging to the African troops in the *Force Publique* (the Free State army). *Force Publique* regulars were mostly Zanzibaris and Hausas recruited in West Africa, and were accompanied on campaign by thousands of local “auxiliaries,” largely cannibals of fluid loyalty. Discipline was maintained through regular flogging.

Steady fighting through 1893 drove the Arabs east, resulting in the death of Sefu in October 1893. Rumaliza met defeat in the war’s final battle in January 1894, when a Belgian shell blew up his ammunition dump and set fire to his fort at Bena Kalunga. Rumaliza’s men were slaughtered as they tried to escape while 2,000 others were taken prisoner. The war shattered the power of the Arabs in eastern and central Africa, damaged the Arab trade in slaves and diverted the Congo’s trade from east African ports down the Congo River to Atlantic coast ports. Under heavy international pressure as news of the cruel nature of his rule in the Congo began to emerge, Leopold II transferred control of his personal estate in Africa to the Belgian government in 1908. Leopold never visited the land he had ruled for 23 years.

Hinde recounted his adventures in the Congo in *The Fall of the Congo Arabs* (London, 1897), translated into French the same year as *La Chute de la domination des arabes du Congo* (Brussels, 1897). Acting not only as a doctor, Hinde was personally involved in the vicious fighting that characterized the campaign. It should be noted that Hinde’s Congo service was nearly always in the field and there does not appear to be any evidence of his implication in the crimes for which the Free State became famous, only for his unwitting enablement of them.

Transferring to the British Foreign Office in 1895, Hinde became a provincial commissioner in the British East Africa Protectorate. While resident in Kenya, Hinde produced a second book, *Last of the Masai* (London, 1901), co-written by his wife, naturalist Hildegard Beatrice Hinde. He died in Wales in 1930, age 67.

This note has its origins in the author’s search for confirmation that Hinde was indeed born in Canada, as many websites claim while failing to provide appropriate documentation. An 1891 census of England, however, records London resident Sidney Langford Hinde having been born in Canada, which would seem to confirm his Canadian origin through information he himself provided. Hinde’s Niagara origin is confirmed in the *Biographie Coloniale Belge* (Institut Royale Coloniale de Belge, T. 1, 1948 col. 509-513).

That Hinde and his Free State comrades have been consigned to historical obscurity is unsurprising. Their defeat of the Arab slavers might have been hailed as a triumph of Western civilization had Leopold and his henchmen not instituted their own savage form of forced labor and its trail of murder, torture and mutilation to meet the demands of the late 19th century rubber boom. The methods of the Free State mercenaries and foremen came to resemble those of the Arab slavers they had run out of the Congo. Eventually, the role of Hinde and others came to be regarded as part of a shameful episode in European colonization, while well-funded campaigns by the Arab League have helped rehabilitate the image of the Arab slavers, portraying them as explorers and traders bringing Islam to the African interior. The appalling first-hand accounts of large-scale cannibalism by native fighters of both sides as described in detail by Hinde and others have also helped relegate memory of the Congo-Arab War to one of the darkest, least-examined corners of the “Scramble for Africa.” 🌸

The careers of Canadian soldiers who served in British forces in 19th century West Africa are described in: Andrew B Godefroy, “Canadian Soldiers in West African Conflicts, 1885-1905,” Canadian Military History 17(1), 2008, pp. 21-36.



Sidney Langford Hinde in later life.
(Sam Donvil)

1921 Brussels “Monument to the Belgian Pioneers in the Congo.” The references to “Arab” slavers have been chiseled out in recent times.

Reciprocal Review—RCMI Affiliates around the world
ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AUSTRALIA
 SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA
by Lynda Chiotti

If there was a contest for best urban location of a private club, the Royal Automobile Club of Australia (RACA) would be a strong contender, placed as it is just steps away from Sydney's Circular Quay and across the road from the Royal Botanic Garden. That makes it relatively easy for visitors to access via bus, train, ferry or car, and a useful place to stay for a visit to Sydney.

RACA has been energetically involved in all things automotive since its inception in 1903, and in 1986, the club incorporated the Imperial Services Club, which



was faced with closing, welcoming members of the armed services, reservists and retired officers. Many current club members own or are fans of historic and classic vehicles. Naturally the club is happy to support local events that feature these cars.

Accommodation is available in one of 29

rooms, ranging from refurbished deluxe king or queen sizes to singles with or without ensuite bathrooms. The latter date from the original 1928 construction of the club building, and I can personally attest that these are quite comfortable.



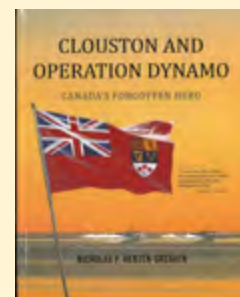
Reciprocal guests are welcome to use the onsite parking, gym, business centre, snooker room, and the elegantly appointed Member's Bar and the Harbour Dining Room, where you can enjoy excellent views of Sydney harbour over breakfast.

Reception is open at RACA 24/7; open hours for dining, amenities and events vary, but breakfast is available every day and families with children are welcome. The heritage building is not wheelchair accessible but there are elevators. 89 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Contact: reception@raca.com.au, +61 (02) 8273 2300, <https://www.raca.com.au/>. 🍁

To obtain the requisite Letter of Introduction contact the RCMI's Front Desk at 416-597-0286 ext 110 or 1-800-585-1072 or frontdesk@rcmi.org by email.

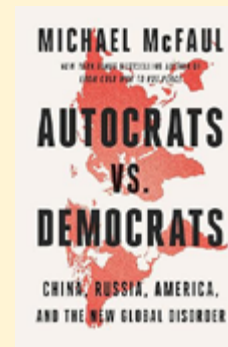
Penny's Picks
 New Library Acquisitions

Never Pass A Fault:
The Royal Canadian Regiment in Peace and at War 1946 to 2001. Vol. 3
 by Tanya Grodzinski



Clouston and Operation Dynamo:
Canada's Forgotten Hero
 by Nicholas P. Herten-Graeven

All That Is Left of Them:
Canadian Uniforms and Kit of the First World War. Volume 1: 1914-1916
 by Robert T. Kaszas and Richard J. Kaszas



Autocrats vs. Democrats:
China, Russia, America, and the New Global Disorder
 by Michael McFaul

A Military History of Modern Egypt:
From the Ottoman Conquest to the Ramadan War
 by Andrew McGregor

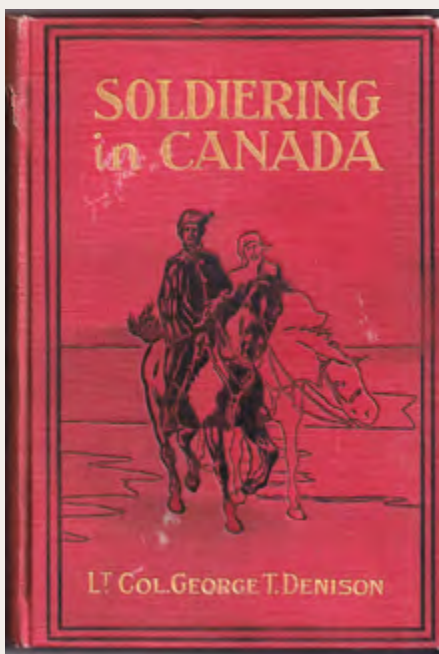


On the Ground: My Life as a Foreign Correspondent
 by Brian Stewart

Lieutenant-Colonel George Denison's account of Soldiering in Canada

In spite of these known preparations, in the face of all these threats, with the want of foresight in military matters which generally characterizes political rulers, while the Fenians went on preparing," thundered the Colonel, "we did nothing."

That could only be Lt.-Col. George T. Denison III, the most accomplished and outspoken cavalry soldier the country has ever produced. He wasn't quite right about "did nothing"—John A. Macdonald had spies well embedded in the Fenian Brotherhood—but this committed militiaman certainly did everything *he* could to stop them. Denison was the fourth generation of a wealthy Loyalist family, marginally a lawyer but far more passionately an imperialist, police magistrate and, most importantly, a soldier of action and intellect. Long the Commanding Officer of the Governor General's Body Guard—virtually a Denison family project—he wrote two books on cavalry and, before us today, *Soldiering in Canada / Recollections and Experiences*, published in Toronto by Morang in 1900.



lars were hardly necessary to win the War of 1812. As for the response to the Fenians, "I doubt ... if the troops of any civilized country were ever much worse equipped than we were at Fort Erie in June, 1866," leading, *inter alia*, to "one of the most primitive attempts at breakfast I ever saw." And being called out for three months ruined his nascent law practice.

Toronto was a nest of spies during the Civil War and Denison's large home west of downtown was a perfect rendezvous; his theoretical work *Modern Cavalry* was largely based on a close study of Confederate tactics, which he much admired (slavery isn't mentioned). Dismissed by the British, it was quickly translated into Russian and German and he claims, credibly, that it helped the Prussians defeat France in 1870.

His monumental history of cavalry won first prize in a contest sponsored by the Tsar of Russia and led to a hilarious audience with the Grand Duke Nicholas in which, Denison admits, he committed "a frightful breach of etiquette." Actually, more than one.

Denison didn't volunteer for the NW Campaign because, he argued, "a large force was being sent to crush a few people who had been wronged and practically goaded into rebellion." They were nevertheless deployed, leading to an epic march over the ice of Lake Superior's north shore (pictured on the cover). If any man was heard grumbling, he warned, "I would send him home to his mother." They performed superbly but were shunned by the commander, General Middleton, who foolishly "left me on the prairie guarding stores with cavalry." The night they arrived home to a hero's welcome in Toronto, he sagely warned his officers that, first thing in the morning, "everybody will be at work falsifying history." ♦



George T. Denison



Body Guard headquarters in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, May 1885. The CO is seated in the middle.

Coming in 2026: An Exhibition of the works of Gertrude Kearns

The RCMI is very pleased to announce the display of the artwork of our Honorary War Artist Gertrude (Trudy) Kearns fresh from the Canadian Embassy in Washington DC. The exhibition will be displayed across the 4th and 5th floors of the Institute, including the Otter Room. As RCMI operations and private functions will continue as usual during the exhibition period, access to the Otter Room will occasionally be limited. Members are encouraged to check upcoming weekly Dispatches for further details, including artwork locations and access information. Please contact our Museum Curator with any questions in the meantime.

Ms Kearns comments:

I am very pleased that a selection of my military portraits will be exhibited at the RCMI in 2026 for seven months, from the end of January until August. The 28 works are mostly Afghanistan and Army-centric, spanning 2011 to 2018, with more recent pieces up to 2025 including RCN and RCAF, and our current Chief of the Defence Staff.

The exhibition comprises large-format paintings, drawings, and fine art prints.

The show has come straight from my recent three-month exhibition at The Embassy of Canada in Washington DC. Twenty-four pieces were personally lent, with The Beaverbrook War Art Collection and the Canadian War Museum loaning my drawing of Major MacLeod, the nurse, and the painting of General Jennie Carignan, Chief of the Defence Staff. Unable to extend the CWM loan, Lieutenant-Colonel Trisha MacLeod as Major, and General Jennie Carignan as Major-General, are represented at RCMI in several original limited-edition giclée prints.

Sittings with the CDS were before her 2019 deployment to Iraq as commander of NATO Mission Iraq. The painting developed in operational time, meaning we were in frequent communication during her command, allowing me a more realistic sense of the mission.

The Washington venue offered a particular context for the show, where these security-flavoured works could serve as a sort of ‘hard-soft cultural currency’, as a timely cultural touchstone in 2025 where diplomacy meets defence in these strategic and interesting times. It drew attention to the values and responsibilities of our Canadian Armed Forces; our allies, particularly our American partners; and the NATO Alliance.

It can do much the same at the RCMI, instead with more specific military and museum contexts. As a private club, access will be restricted. However, the membership and related activities make it an ideal repository for these works for a good half year.

In fact the political upheaval of 2025, both near and far, has us Canadians truly standing on guard, so you might appreciate my new large format works of General Wayne Eyre in POLYCRISIS, and Vice-Admiral Angus Topshee in O URGENT SEAS (my word play on urgencies). They are installed together opposite the elevators on the fifth floor, where Tecumseh and Brock have been relocated and installed stunningly in the Library: one pair of commanders replacing another, a good two hundred years hence.

I have partnered a recently deceased former club member, Colonel Douglas Bland, with Arctic Security Analyst Dr Rob Huebert in my 2025 *Canadian National Anthem*.

HMCS York Commander Paul Smith’s 2024 portrait has a more local officer gracing the halls.

It has been an ideal collaboration with Randa Bustami, RCMI curator, whose professionalism, vision and appreciation of the work, and considerations about its placement, has the fourth and fifth floors looking spectacular.

The work aims to illuminate the complexities of service and mission. I hope this exhibition will enlighten, inform, inspire, and enhance the mandate of our remarkable institution. 🍁



Trudy Kearns, right, with Major Julie-Anne Labonte, Public Affairs Advisor, CDLS, Canadian Embassy, Washington DC

Objects of Service: Reflecting on the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War

In 2025, Canada marked the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Anniversaries such as this invite remembrance, but they also create space for reflection. Beyond marking dates and outcomes, they prompt deeper questions about how war is remembered, whose experiences are centred, and what forms of service are most likely to endure in public memory.

The Royal Canadian Navy exhibition currently on view on the 4th floor of the Institute was developed in this commemorative context. Rather than revisiting familiar operational narratives or highlighting major battles and ships, the exhibition approaches naval history through material culture. Objects are used as points of connection to lived experience, allowing visitors to reflect on service as something shaped by routine, labour, identity, and sustained effort over time. During the Second World War, naval service was defined as much by repetition and endurance as by moments of action. Sailors spent long stretches maintaining equipment, standing watch, navigating unpredictable waters, and adapting to life governed by discipline and hierarchy. Shore-based personnel worked within systems that demanded accuracy, coordination, and constant attention. These experiences rarely fit neatly into heroic narratives, yet they formed the foundation of Canada's wartime naval operations.

Material culture offers a way into these quieter histories. Uniforms, tools, and personal objects bear the marks of use and adaptation. They reflect bodies at work and individuals navigating institutional structures. Read carefully, such objects reveal how service was organized and experienced across a range of roles, both visible and unseen.

One of the most important interpretive threads within the exhibition is the recognition that wartime naval service extended well beyond combat at sea. This is particularly evident in the inclusion of material associated with the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service. Established in 1942, the WRCNS represented a significant shift in how military labour was structured. Women took on essential shore-based roles in communications, intelligence, administration, and technical work, enabling the navy to meet expanding operational demands. While the contributions of the Wrens were critical to the functioning of the wartime navy, they have often been treated as peripheral in popular memory. Their service is sometimes framed as exceptional or auxiliary rather than structural. Presenting WRCNS material within the exhibition challenges this framing by situating women's labour as integral to naval operations. It reinforces the understanding that service took many forms, and that gender shaped not only who served, but how that service was recorded and remembered.

The exhibition also draws attention to the industrial and civilian dimensions of naval history. Wartime shipbuilding was a national effort that mobilized workers across Canada, including in Toronto. Civilian labour made the rapid expansion and maintenance of the fleet possible, yet these contributions are frequently separated from military narratives. By acknowledging the industrial infrastructure that sustained the navy, the exhibition situates military service within a broader wartime system that blurred the boundaries between civilian and uniformed effort.

Alongside objects, the exhibition incorporates a video component that adds another layer to this exploration of service and memory. The video features interviews with Second World War navy veterans, combined with archival footage from the wartime period. These voices and images introduce a temporal shift within the gallery, allowing visitors to encounter the past through firsthand reflection rather than retrospective summary. The veterans' interviews are particularly powerful in their ordinariness. Rather than focusing solely on dramatic moments, they speak to daily routines, relationships, and the gradual accumulation of experience over time. Their reflections echo the themes raised by the objects on display, reinforcing the idea that service was shaped by work, waiting, and repetition as much as by moments of danger or excitement.

Archival footage further contextualizes these accounts, situating personal memory within a wider visual record of the war. Moving images of ships, training, and wartime activity underscore the scale of the naval effort while also highlighting its human dimension. Together, the



interviews and archival clips bridge the gap between material culture and lived experience, reminding viewers that objects and images are connected through the people who once used, wore, and inhabited them.

Another theme explored through the exhibition is the way wartime objects are categorized and interpreted over time. Items made from military materials are often grouped under familiar labels such as “trench art”, terms that carry specific assumptions about authorship and context. While widely used, these labels can also be limiting. Objects fashioned from spent ammunition or surplus materials were not exclusively produced by soldiers in combat zones. Many were made by civilians, factory workers, or family members, and served a range of practical and commemorative purposes. Reconsidering this language is not simply a matter of terminology. It affects how participation in wartime culture is understood and whose experiences are acknowledged. By situating such objects within a naval and industrial context, the exhibition encourages visitors to think more critically about the stories attached to material culture and the limits of inherited categories. It invites reflection on how remembrance is shaped not only by what is preserved, but by how it is described.

Throughout the exhibition, objects and media function less as symbols of heroism and more as evidence of sustained effort. They speak to routine, adaptation, and the physical and emotional demands of wartime service. This approach aligns with broader shifts in military history toward social and cultural perspectives that foreground lived experience alongside operational analysis.

For members of the Institute, many of whom bring deep personal, professional, or familial connections to military history, the exhibition offers an opportunity to revisit the Royal Canadian Navy from a different angle. It invites viewers to look beyond rank, battle honours, and strategic outcomes, and to consider the networks of labour and support that made naval operations possible. In doing so, it encourages a more expansive understanding of service and contribution. As Canada reflects on eighty years since the end of the Second World War, this Royal Canadian Navy exhibition offers a thoughtful mode of commemoration. Through objects, voices, and archival imagery, it honours service in its many forms and underscores the value of material culture as a historical witness. Rather than closing the story of the wartime navy, it opens space for continued reflection on how the past is remembered and how its traces continue to shape the present. 🍁



Snoopy Sez: The Red Baron Shall Return!



*Watch RCMI
publications
for further
information!*

*Snoopy Also Sez: Save the
Date—May 28!
The Great 2026 Museum Auction*

Around the Inner Clubs



Pistol Club

The RCMI Pistol Club closed the year with a series of important events.

RCMI Pistol Club Gala—November 22, 2025

Wonderful social event—good food, good company and a chance to dress up in the fine tradition of the RCMI. Thanks to Lisa Zuber for organizing the event. Special thanks to Sgt Andrew Bennett of the Toronto Scottish Regiment for piping us into dinner. Awards given that night went to:

- Top Zombie Shooter—Gavin Bequiri for his bravery, speed and shooting accuracy as he successfully held off the annual Zombie Invasion just outside Barrie, Ontario in the fall of 2025.
- Top Overall Pistol Shot—Fletcher Johnston
- The Michitsch Club Member of the Year Award given to the member(s) who best exemplified dedication and commitment to the Club and its aims—Fletcher and Hailey Johnston

Pistol Club Annual General Meeting—November 27, 2025

New Board of Directors for 2026

Chairman Darin Davis
Secretary David Zuber
Operations Gavin Bequiri
Quartermaster Darrin Langen
Membership Terry Pich

Special thanks and appreciation to Cathy Evans and Trace Molson for their work respectively as Directors responsible for Membership and Finance in 2025.

During 2025, the Pistol Club maintained its strong membership roster and expanded its activities in pistol, rifle and shotgun instruction and application shoots. The year ended with shooting and socializing at the Port Perry Gun Club in the Regional Municipality of Durham—sponsored by member Bill Little. Many thanks to Christine Soper for providing the luncheon grub. 🍁

—Don Halikowski

Right, top to bottom: BGen (Ret'd) Don and Heather Halikowski 'puttin' on the Ritz' at the Club Gala. Cathy Evans, President Darin Davis and Christine Soper at the Club Gala. Top Zombie Shot—Gavin Bequiri. Top Shot for the Year—Fletcher Johnston. Immediate right: Howard Michitsch Club Member(s) of the Year—Fletcher and Hailey Johnston



Report from Kingston

The month of November is very special to us all. Here in Kingston ceremonies of remembrance were held in several venues including the Cross of Sacrifice Cenotaph in Macdonald Park, the RCL Branch 560, the CFB Kingston Vimy McNaughton Gate and, as shown below, the Memorial Arch of the RMC Kingston.



I continue to work towards strengthening the RCMI/RKUSI relationship and to promote strategic outreach. Furthermore, I would like to explore opening communications with the Canadian War Museum and its registered charitable partner, the Friends of the Canadian War Museum (FCWM). A number of our colleagues are members of both the RCMI and the FCWM (and indeed the RKUSI) and

all share a deep interest in military history.

There are always benefits to working closely with a like-minded organization; in this regard, the relationship between the RCMI Kingston Chapter and the Royal Kingston United Service Institute (RKUSI) is working to the benefit of us all. The leadership of the RCMI has generously offered a special discounted promotion to RKUSI members who attend our joint events. I have offered to sponsor any applicants; to date, the response has been tentative but I remain positive!

Events: On November 20 in Korea Hall, the Canadian Army Command and Staff College, Fort Frontenac the RKUSI hosted a five-member panel presentation devoted to CSIS. As is the practice, a number of our RCMI Kingston chapter members were in attendance.

The year 2024 marked the 40th anniversary of the creation of CSIS from the former Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Security Service. The panel members Don Mahar, Ralph Mahar, Iwona Mooney, Dan Stanton and James Gough were all retired from the Service and discussed how they were recruited into CSIS and, to the extent permitted, the path of their careers; personally, I found the scope of their activities very informative. In the course of discussion all those in attendance learned a great deal and were inspired by the candour and commitment of the panel members even post retirement.

We learned that our Security Service is held in high regard by the members of the FIVE Eyes intelligence and security community but, interestingly, that the CSIS Act limits the Service in terms of foreign intelligence. It was apparent that panel members held a strong view that current international circumstances certainly warranted a review of such limits. Moreover, I learned of the vital importance that an intelligence perspective be embedded in any national security policy.

I am pleased to advise that we are planning an event for May 21 at the Fort Frontenac Officers' Mess. This will be a joint RCMI/RKUSI event for members and spouses; we propose a late afternoon gathering with refreshments and featuring a speaker. We will provide tempting food and beverage offerings prepared by the FFOM culinary team. Attendance will be on a cost-per-attendee basis and we look forward to a large turnout and an enjoyable late-afternoon springtime gathering. This will certainly be one not to miss!

We are forming a joint project team and some volunteers, including Dr Dan Eustace Director of our Security Studies Program and a member of both the RCMI and the RKUSI, have already come forward; but we need more! We will keep you all in the loop as we move ahead.

This venture is beyond the blue-sky stage but it still only a bird-in-the bush. So...grateful you signal your interest in attending. Contacts are me bobhamilton@sympatico.ca and deanmilner77@gmail.com. We need your support in the preliminary planning of the event.

—Commodore (Ret'd) Robert W. Hamilton

RCMI Contact Information

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Tollfree: 1 800 585 1072

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Capt (Ret'd) Adam Hermant

(416) 4609594

herm01@sympatico.ca

Notes

Event Start Times

(except where specifically noted otherwise in flyers and *Dispatches*)

Military History Nights

Dinner Service: 1800
Lecture begins: 1930

Defence and Security Studies

Live events: 1930
Virtual events as announced in flyers or *Dispatches*

Dress Dinners

Reception in Long Bar: 1800
Dinner in Otter Room: 1900

Social Events

See event flyers and *Dispatches* for details

Members are Encouraged, Exhorted, and Urged to reserve as early as possible either with Susan Cook

*susan.cook@rcmi.org
or 416 597-0286 ext 111 or
on-line at www.rcmi.org
(Calendar/Event Registration)*

*Up to date as of
December 31, 2025*

Coming in Spring 2026

(Save this for your fridge!)

Wednesday, January 14

Defence and Security Studies:

“War on the Past, War on the Future: Military and Political Directions in the Conflict in Sudan” with Andrew McGregor

Saturday, January 24

Robbie Burns Night Dinner and Dance

Wednesday, January 28

Member and Son Night with Ian P. MacKinnon
Past President of the Royal Military Colleges Club of Canada,

Friday, February 6 or 13

Afghanistan Luncheon (To Be Confirmed)

Saturday, February 14

Valentine's Day Dinner

Wednesday, February 11

Military History Night: “Lawrence in Arabia” with Scott Anderson

Tuesday February 24

Defence and Security Studies

“Evolving Canadian Professional Military Education in the New Global Security Environment” with Cmdre Michael Barefoot, CFC Commandant

Thursday, February 26—The Chief of the Defence Staff
Gen Jennie Carignan

Wednesday, March 25

Military History Night: “Out of the Sky: Jewish Palestinian parachutists during World War Two” with Matti Friedman

Tuesday, March 24

VIRTUAL Defence and Security Studies
“Inspired by Taiwan” with George Takach

Sunday, April 5 – Easter Sunday Brunch

Wednesday, April 15

1100-1700 DSS Conference “If I only had a DIME”
with keynote speaker Bob Rae, other panellists TBC

Wednesday, April 15

Dinner With Bob Rae

Wednesday, April 22

Military History Night: “The Wind From All Directions”
with Novelist Ron Thompson

Sunday, May 10—Mother's Day Brunch

Wednesday, May 13

Military History Night: “Yasukuni Shrine and Yushukan War Museum
with Derwin Mak