

# THE / LE BULLETIN



## President's Report

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the first Bulletin designed and prepared by our new editor – Bethany Aitchison. Bethany hails from Midland, Ontario, and attended Nipissing University. Currently, she is the curator at the Canadian Forces Museum of Aerospace Defence in North Bay. She is also an active volunteer within the community. Not to put too much pressure on her, OMMC is expecting great things from her. Bethany has plans for four Bulletins a year. Please give her your full support, and remember the Bulletin is member driven. Be sure to send in your articles, photos and

questions. The last Bulletin was the best ever with 100% member contribution. Keep up the good work and make Bethany's job easier.



OMMC 2012 has come and gone. Montreal was an excellent venue, with most events within walking distance of the Opus Hotel, good weather, and the added bonus of the demonstrators and their casseroles. I extend OMMC's sincere gratitude to Guy Gosselin, Laurent Claude Laliberte and all their volunteers for their excellent organization, speedy transport, many meals, and effortless ability to handle 1000 other things. Special thanks to Bruce Bolton and Cal Kufta for a Scottish dinner (haggis and snuff included) at the Black Watch, Brian Tracy and Terry Whitty for our special event and dinner at the Canadian Grenadier Guards, Eric Ruel for tours and lunch at Fort Saint Jean and our very special guest speaker Senator Romeo Dallaire, Andrew Gregory for tours at 25 CFSD, the Log museum and picnic lunch, and again Guy Gosselin for a sumptuous mess dinner (with snuff). The week proved to be intense with several lecture from Dr Desmond Morton, NPP, DDAL, CIP and disaster planning. Thanks to all the lecturers who took time from their busy schedules to be with us.

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The Executive and Board also would like to offer our very sincere thanks to Laurent Claude Laliberte for providing leadership, advice and direction on a particularly touchy issue this past year. Thanks to him we have resolved the issue to OMMC's satisfaction and may now move forward.

One of the most fun events was the presentation of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal. Working with the Chancellery Office was a bit daunting as I waited for the final number of medals to be presented. I was hoping for two or three but was surprised with the number we did receive. Twenty-seven were presented on 28 May 2012. It was difficult to narrow down the list of candidates, as there are so many deserving volunteers within all the museums, never mind the number of curators and directors who work diligently overseeing the direction all the curatorial activities. To the surprise and delight of many, I managed to keep the ceremony and presentations secret. Congratulations to all who received them. Wear them proudly as you deserve them.

Planning is now underway for next year's museum studies programme to be held in London, Ontario with the RCR Museum as host. The dates are 26 May to 1 June 2013. Mark them on your calendar.

If you have missed the deadline for this issue of the Bulletin, September and another deadline is just around the corner. Get busy with those contributions.

Have a good summer!

Marilyn Gurney  
President



## British Home Boys Fight Together in the Great War

Contributed by Susan Robinson Peters  
Iroquois Platoon of Company B 154rth Overseas Battalion  
Canadian Expeditionary Force, Iroquois, Dundas County, Ontario

Every small rural community has its stories of hardships and courage. Dundas County, in Eastern Ontario, is no different. However, these stories come to life when long lost family comes looking at your doorstep. This is the case with the Iroquois Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, during efforts to catalogue and organize the collections donated by local members of the Legion. Amongst the dust bunnies many old photographs have been discovered. One in particular came to my attention, as the name of Lieutenant William Thwaite was identified on the title of the photo.

The name of William Thwaite had been of significance as a descendant of his sister had been in contact with me, in search of any possible information about his relative. There had been a decided effort to find a way to learn all that they could about him, as his family connections had been severed when he was very young.

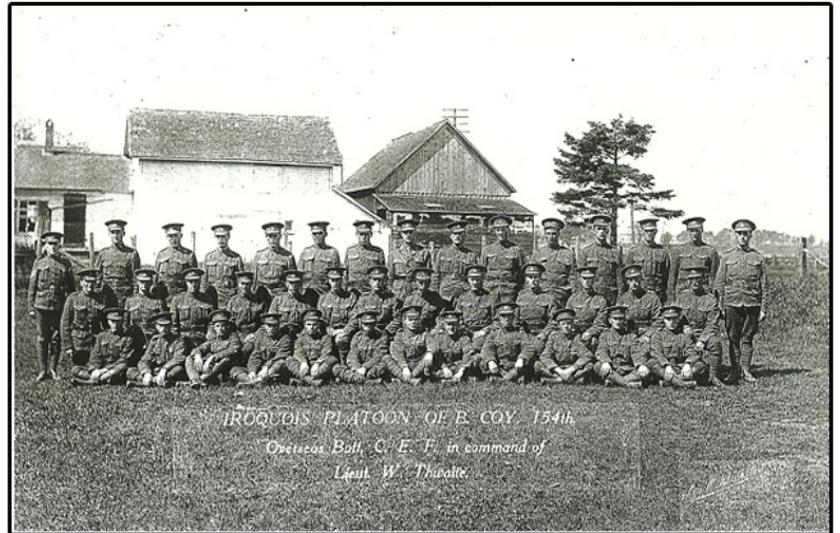


Photo Courtesy William Shearing, S D & G Highlanders, British Home Children from Dundas County, in B Company, Walter Lawrence, Clifford Shaver, Frank David, Valentine and Peter James Lang

He was one of thousands of children who were taken away from their families, and placed on ships by Dr Barnardo and his staff. The general consensus at the time, was that these children would have a better life in Canada, as British Home Children, then they would fighting for their lives in the slums of Great Britain. William was born in March, 1892 in Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, the youngest of 11 children. When he was 3 months old, his father died of a heart attack and his mother was left destitute. While little is known about his early years, it is known that he was taken into the care of Doctor Barnardo, and at the ripe old age of 13, he was on a ship sailing from Liverpool to Toronto, along with 160 other children. After Toronto, he was sent to live with a family in Hainesville, Dundas County and settled in Iroquois, with the Jackson family. After reaching the age of majority, he stayed in the community and worked as a dry goods salesman. He was a member of the Anglican Church and an active member of the Masons. Up until the discovery of this photograph, there was no known image of William Thwaite. This was a eureka moment for me, as I knew that the family would be overjoyed to finally see an image of their relative.

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It is not known if he was aware of the whereabouts of his siblings, but it seems that he did have a brotherhood with other Home Children in the area. In this photo is at least three other British Home Children who settled in Dundas County. It was with great excitement that I learned that these men had a common thread, that they could support each other due to this common experience. Unfortunately, like so many men in the Great War, they were brothers to their death. William Thwaite died in the Battle of Amiens and is buried at Fouquescourt British Cemetery in France. It appears that only one of the British Home Children, Walter Lawrence came home.



Photograph courtesy of S D & G Highlanders via William Shearing

## A Chinese-Canadian in WWII: LCol Kam Len Douglas Sam

By Don Manley, Comox Valley Air Force Museum Association

A great deal has been written about various ethnic groups who took part in WW2. In Canada, little has been said about the role of Canada's Chinese population. Many tried to enlist but were rejected. In 1940 the Cabinet War Committee made a decision not to enlist Asians for military service. One man in particular didn't give up. His name was Lieutenant-Colonel Kam Len Douglas Sam (1918-1989), born in Victoria to parents who came from Yin Ping, near Canton.

Sam, like many young men in Canada, wanted to fly so in 1938 he went to England to join the RAF. Once again his ethnic background barred him from flying; although, he could possibly be ground crew. Disillusioned, he returned to Canada in 1941 where he applied to the RCAF and was again rejected. However, from October 1, 1942, the regulations changed and he was recalled to take the tests to become air crew. The RCN also had the same regulations, although no more than 10 Chinese Canadians enlisted in the Navy.

Sam became a Lancaster pilot and flew 28 missions but, on June 28, 1944, he was shot down. Evading capture he managed to contact the Resistance and, at the request of MI9, while pretending to be an Indochinese student stranded by the war. He acted as a liaison between the groups of Resistance fighters to set up arms and other equipment dropped by RAF aircraft. He worked with the resistance until October 1944 and the French awarded him the Croix de Guerre with a Silver Star.

After the war and in was trained by MI6, Sam worked for the RAF in 1950-57 as an intelligence officer in Malaya in the war against the Chinese Communist Guerrillas. Some of the guerrillas had been trained by the Chinese Canadian in Force 136 to fight the Japanese and Sam noted they had definitely been well trained. About 600 Chinese Canadians served in the war.

## Touch to Explore: War of 1812 iPhone/iPad App of Historic Locations

By Kyra Knapp, War of 1812 Project Facilitator, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

“There’s an app for that” has become almost common prose amongst the tech savvy consumers that drive today’s popular culture. But what if we told you that it is not just present-day popular culture, but long standing local history that is benefiting from the wave of the technological future?

Our area’s rich War of 1812 history has been virtually transformed with the help of a group of history buffs (and the technologically literate) students of the University of Western Ontario’s Master of Arts in Public History program. “Digital media is the here and now for teaching and learning about the past. The smart phone app will make The War of 1812 accessible to audiences like never before. It offers something for everyone, from the casual tourist to the specialist historian,” states Dr.

Michael Dove, Acting Director of the Department of History at Western University. Dove, who has acted as a faculty supervisor for the project shows great pride in not only the quality of his students’ work.

But also in the way that this project has strengthened the bond between the local community and historical research, “This is a remarkable opportunity for our students and for our MA Public History program at Western. Students have been able to practice history outside of the classroom and thereby realize the aims of public history; that is embracing community collaboration, civic engagement, and reciprocal learning. Such close working relationships between the university and the extraordinary War of 1812 heritage community of individuals and institutions in place across the southwest region of Ontario provides a valuable model for future partnerships.”

The app in question follows “Route 1812” and “The Tecumseh Parkway,” historic driving routes throughout South West Ontario that show you the sites, stories, and sounds of the War of 1812. Mined from an extensive array of archival materials, this smart phone app combines thorough research and spectacular images, such as the captivating paintings by Windsor artist Peter Rindlisbacher, to give people an in-depth sense of this chapter of the War. It not only enhances our understanding of those more well-known 1812 sites and events, such as Amherstburg and The Battle of the Thames, but also sheds much light on those lesser known stories from the war such as the legendary heroine of London’s Reservoir Hill, Mrs. McNames, the so-called “Laura Secord of London.”

The app has also benefited from its connection to the development of the Tecumseh Parkway, currently running through the Chatham-Kent region and focusing on Chatham’s historical 1812 connection. The Parkway has recently received several grants, including a grant from the Heritage Canada 1812 fund and also the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the development of Peace Gardens along the Parkway, which will be planted and maintained by the Kent Military Re-Enactment Society.

The app launched on June 23, 2012 and can be accessed at [1812ontario.ca](http://1812ontario.ca) or by scanning the QR code here! Pull out your smart phones and get ready to learn our local history in a new and exciting way.



## Preservation for Pennies: Small Budget Storage Solutions

Contributed by Cynthia Limeburner-Jones

In the OMMC, there are large well funded museums, but most of us are involved in small organization with little or no funding for storage or conservation not to mention a lack of space for storage. It is my hope to develop a forum where we can all share solutions to some of the storage issues that occur with small collections.

### Flag and banner storage

Do you have flat textiles that need to be stored rolled such as flags or banners? Go to your local fabric or carpet store and ask for left over cardboard tubes. The cardboard tubes can be covered in acid-free buffered paper or encapsulating film, two layers should do, then the items can be rolled onto the tubes. Just make sure when the item is completely rolled up onto



the tube that you roll an extra layer or two of paper around the outside to protect the object from light and dust. Do not use rubber bands or tie anything tight around the rolls. Use unbleached twill tape and tie loosely beyond the edges of the textile if possible. You can then suspend the roll between shelves or run cord through the center of the tube and suspend them from available locations. It is best not store rolls on shelves, it is not good for the textile.

### Storage bags

Have something too big for storage boxes, but too small for large storage? And that is an odd size? Try old cotton pillowcases from resale shops. Use white so that there is no chance of dye transfer and wash 3 to 10 times in clear water to ensure that all the bleach and detergent is rinsed out. If you want to make a drawstring, cut a small notch in the open end of the pillowcase along edge, then tie your twill tape to a large safety pin and pull your safety pin through the casing sewn into the edge of all pillow cases. Make sure the twill tape is longer than the circumference of the pillowcase, so that you will have plenty of extra cord to tie together once you have pulled it all the way around

through the casing. You now have an instant storage bag.

### Hanging garment storage

Have uniforms hanging and you can't afford separate cotton garment bags? First, make sure all plastic dry cleaning covers are removed. They are only to protect the garment until it gets home from the dry cleaners. Once you have all plastic removed, hang the garment on a proper hanger. If you can't afford a padded cotton cover, here is a combination of solutions. Someone suggested to me using a pool noodle to provide a proper support across under the shoulders. Cover it with muslin or acid-free paper and it provides perfect support for shoulders. If there is a seamstress around, there are patterns available to make hanger covers that can be slipped over suit hangers. For a cover that provides better support and better protection between the hanger and garment, sew cotton or polyester batting to the inside of the hanger covers. Once everything in hanging, you can cover all of the garments together by throwing large white sheets over the garments. Just make sure they are rinsed in the same manner as the pillow case in the solution above.



Have suggestions or ideas for cheap solutions to preservation, conservation or storage problems? Let me know. I will try them out and try to include helpful hints in future newsletters. Good luck and good storing! Send your ideas/suggestions to [cindylynn.jones@gmail.com](mailto:cindylynn.jones@gmail.com).

## A Revitalized Mandate Results in Expedient Airstrip at the Canadian Military Engineers Museum

Text and photos by Sandra Johnson Penney, Curator, Canadian Military Engineers Museum

In March 2012, the Museum's Executive Committee expanded its membership to reflect the composition of the CME Branch by bringing into the group representatives from Construction Engineering. This not only increased the profile of the Museum within the Branch but served to underline that the history of the Branch includes the Construction Engineers of the pre-Unification RCAF. With the new Committee in place, the staff was asked to improve the representation of RCAF CE in the exhibits.



With that task in mind, they were delighted when a staff member at Base Construction Engineering at CFB Esquimalt asked if the Museum was interested in pieces of expedient airstrip that had been installed by the RCAF's 9 Construction Maintenance Unit at the Naval Radio Station Masset, BC in the 1940s. That resulted in the June 21st delivery to the Museum of two segments of expedient airstrip that are now being assessed for conservation and exhibit installation.

The steel grating had been installed in the sand at Masset to create a landing strip for aircraft on the beach and it remained there for over fifty years before being salvaged and used as garden fencing. Due to the rusting, staff consulted with the Canadian Conservation Institute to determine the best course of action to stabilize the metal. It was determined that the marine environment would have deposited salt in the layers of spalling rust that would need to be removed before any sort of sealant can be applied to the surface.

In consultation with the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering, a best course of action will be determined so that the airstrip can be installed in two exhibits: one in the Museum about RCAF construction in the 1940s and the other in the Airfield Construction wing of the Engineering School that will be visible to visitors and can be used by School teaching staff.

Corporal Colin Barnes, Sapper Jon Morro and Sergeant Dymond of the CME Museum examine the expedient airstrip to determine how it should be handled for removal from its shipping crate. The crate was too large to manoeuvre into the store room for opening.



Detail of the spalling rust on a cleat. After over fifty years in a damp saline environment, a large area of the grating is in this condition.



## Ontario Regiment Museum's Tank Saturday Success

Contributed by Gary Bazowsky

The Ontario Regiment museum has grown from humble beginnings in one room of Oshawa's Parkwood Estate, a National Historic Site, and now occupies three buildings totaling approximately twenty thousand square feet located in the south field of the Oshawa municipal airport.

In addition to a growing collection of artifacts relating to the history of the regiment back to the Fenian Rebellion of 1866, we also showcase Canada's largest collection of operational historic military vehicles, now numbering over eighty.

As with many military museums, we tend to be the best kept secret in town, in order to promote the museum and raise public awareness of the long and distinguished history of the Ontario Regiment, we initiated our Tank Saturday program about three years ago. These events are held on the second Saturday of each month at the museum and showcase a different historic vehicle which has been meticulously restored and maintained by our dedicated team of "Ferret Club" volunteers.

Visitors to our Tank Saturdays hear an explanation of the featured vehicle and have an opportunity to experience see and hear or photograph it in operation on our closed course. This year will see

us operating an M4 Sherman tank, an M24 Chaffee light tank, M551 Sheridan infantry support tank, and an M60 Patton main battle tank as well as historic trucks, jeeps and other various M113 based armoured vehicles.

A typical tank Saturday will draw about 200 visitors to the event and permits them to tour the museum itself and learn about the significant role that the citizens of Oshawa and surrounding area have played, and continue to play, in the service of Canada from 1866 to the present day.

In addition to our website and to further increase public awareness of the ongoing development of the museum, we have entered the world of social media and are now available on Facebook, Twitter and have a YouTube Channel. We have also recently produced a 34-minute, professionally narrated DVD showcasing our Tank Saturdays which is available at the museum and through other locations in the community.

For further information please visit:

[www.ontrmuseum.ca](http://www.ontrmuseum.ca)

[www.facebook.com/OntarioRegimentMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/OntarioRegimentMuseum)

Or e-mail us at: [info@ontrmuseum.ca](mailto:info@ontrmuseum.ca)

## Wartime Pilot's Effects Find New Home at Museum

By Bethany Aitchison

It started with a hat, a Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) forage cap from the 1950s to be exact. The Canadian Forces Museum of Aerospace Defence (CFMAD) was contacted in the fall of 2011 by a gentleman offering up his late father's forage cap. As it turned out, the donation was much more than just an aging piece of clothing.

A brief biography on the donor's father coupled with some quick research showed that Fitzroy Cavendish Carling-Kelly, Group Captain (Ret'd equivalent to a Colonel), had a most distinguished career with the RCAF. Carling-Kelly was one of the first 1,000 to join the RCAF; his service number is only four digits long. In his career, he spent many years as a flying instructor at Borden and Trenton. A highly decorated veteran, his experience as a pilot during multiple missions in the Second World War set into motion his astonishing story as a Prisoner of War (POW) after his aircraft was shot down. After the war he further acted as an air attaché for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Most of his memorabilia were offered to the museum as well. These items included his dog tags (both RCAF and POW), certificates dating back to the 1930s during his training and even his pilot logbooks, which span his entire career. These logbooks list the 62 types of aircraft he flew as well as every mission he undertook; including a late entry regarding the night he and his crew were shot down over Germany.

These artifacts were graciously accepted by the museum and some will be incorporated into the display space in the near future. The donation may have started with a simple hat, but the additional items and the story behind the gentleman whom owned them create a truly impressive collection for which the museum is proud to provide a home.

### The Organization of Military Museums of Canada

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