

THE/LE BULLETIN



The Robert Henderson PoW Collection Now “Interned” at the Royal Alberta Museum in Edmonton

By Sean Moir, Curator, Military and Political History, Royal Alberta Museum

Canada was home to nearly 35,000 German POWs during the Second World War. Several thousand civilian internees were also imprisoned during this time; some of these were German merchant sailors, others Canadian citizens thought to be a threat to national security or known enemy sympathizers.



POW Camp at Wainwright – this facility was used to house German officers and civilian internees from January 1945 to May 1946.

Commencing in 1940, Canada and other Commonwealth countries agreed to house thousands of German prisoners in British custody. British authorities were understandably concerned - the growing number of German POWs represented an army of occupation in waiting should the Nazis invade. German POWs were shipped to Canada from June -July 1940 to October 1944. Most of those shipped to Canada early in war were Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine personnel engaged in the Battles of Britain and the Atlantic, but as the war progressed across Europe and North Africa, the number of enemy personnel sent to Canada increased exponentially.

Camps were situated across Canada, including several in Alberta at Wainwright, Kananaskis, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat – the latter two being the largest in the country, each housing in excess of ten thousand inmates. Veterans of the First World War, most too old for active overseas service, were formed into a unit called the Veteran Guard of Canada in 1941. Once trained and supplied they took over responsibility for guarding the camps from the Canadian Provost Corps.

When Robert Henderson started collecting POW material he applied a “shotgun” approach as he acquired items from many different time periods and regions of the world. He soon realized few collectors and historians had addressed the Canadian story and this became his focus.

Continued on next page...

Robert Henderson PoW Collection on display in collector's home prior to acquisition, January 2013



Continued from previous page...

The artifacts represent all aspects of this little known episode of Canadian history, ranging from remnants of the camps - isolation cell door, pieces of barbed wire, a spotlight and a mock machine gun - to objects that shed light on camp life – guard's and prisoner's uniforms and insignia, escape maps, works of art (paintings/sketches) and crafts (carvings/ships-in-bottles).

The Royal Alberta Museum is honored Mr. Henderson considered Alberta's provincial museum a worthy repository for his collection. We must now begin the challenging task of processing the collection and preparing it for public access through exhibits, online presentations, research and loans. We encourage you to visit our website regularly for updates on this story.



Remnant of perimeter fence post with wire from
Camp 132 – Medicine Hat



Wood model of Bismarck battleship with moving parts in
custom case made by German POW interned at
Camp 133 – Lethbridge

Vimy Park Memorial Restoration

From the 'Bugles' Blast' - Royal Winnipeg Rifles Association Regimental Newsletter

Thanks to the efforts of two stalwart members of the association, the RWRA Vimy Park Monument is going to receive a much needed facelift this May. The monument is showing its age, having weathered the elements for 21 years; the black paint highlighting the Regiments Battle Honours, crests and honoured dead from the incident at Le Chateau d'Audrieu is fading considerably, or worn away entirely.



Former battalion members MWO Roger Zerff and Sgt Mike Nickerson, will be generously donating their time to power wash and clean the monument on all sides; that accomplished, they will painstakingly prime and paint all the names, Battle Honours and Regimental crests by hand. Quite a commitment— especially as Roger live 40 km outside of Winnipeg! Weather permitting, the monument will be looking like new in time for the D-Day Reunion parade on the 8th of June. Anyone wanting to help with the project are encouraged to contact Gerry Woodman or Sgt Beaudry - we'll talk to Roger and Mike and put you to work!

The Spitfire Display

By Pat Murphy, Vancouver Island Military Museum

The Vancouver Island Military Museum amongst many other displays has probably the largest collection of scale model Spitfires on display in Canada.



The display was completed to honour the thousands of Canadians that flew the fabulous Spitfire during the Second World War. Many young Canadians were well aware of the Spitfire after its maiden flight in March 1936. The Spitfire with its magnificent Rolls Royce Merlin engine was well publicized in Canadian newspapers, featured in news reels of the day and British aviation magazines that were available in drug stores and local libraries. Young Canadian males were well informed of its prowess and grace and no doubt visualized themselves at the controls of this super star of a modern fighting aircraft, the Spitfire was the motivation for many RCAF recruits to enlist.

Our display features forty 1:48 scale Spitfire models all representing a Spitfire flown by a Canadian in either an RAF or RCAF Squadron. Each model has a picture of the pilot along with an identification card showing the pilots Squadron, home town and the location where the Spitfire was based as well as the serial number of the individual Spitfire. The display features Spitfires that were flown in Malta, the Battle of Britain, Northern Europe and South East Asia.

Each Spitfire required about 40-50 hours of build time and many hours of research to find the details that went into each Spitfire. Some details came from the veterans themselves or from the families of the Spitfire pilots.

Some of Canada's top scoring fighter pilots are included in the display and just recently two more well known former RCAF Spitfire pilots provided details on the markings of the Spitfire they flew and our builder completed them. Doug Lindsay and Don Laubman, both of Red Deer Alberta, were pleased with the finished models and the many visitors to our museum will be able to relate to the service and sacrifice of Canadians through this popular Spitfire display.



The Vancouver Island Military museum is located on the waterfront in Downtown Nanaimo on Vancouver Island; we are open 5 days each week from 10 am until 4 pm.

Karen Storwick's search for the truth about a photograph of a Christmas dinner at Ortona continues below. This is the third in a four part series and picks up the story as Karen travels to Italy to find the exact location.

The Mystery of the Christmas Dinner Photo Revealed

By Karen Storwick, Director of Communications, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry

I visited Ortona in May 2008 determined to solve the mystery. Armed with the famous photo, I walked the streets of Ortona to ask the locals if they were familiar with the story, stopping every few feet to ask them. Without hesitation, young and old, the people of Ortona, confirmed in broken English that this was the Christmas Dinner; it was the popular memory of the town. They then pointed me in the direction of the Church of Santa Maria di Constantinopoli. Clearly, the photograph held the same iconographic status in Ortona as it had for Canadians.

Looking around at the Church, I didn't see anything at all that resembled the architectural details in the photograph. After some time scrutinizing the building, a man walked up and asked if I needed assistance. He was the Director of the school and knew the history of the area well. I showed him the picture and asked him about the Christmas dinner. "Sure, sure!" He said in his thick Italian accent. "It was here, inside the church!". I was skeptical that he understood fully what I was asking and wondered if everyone in Ortona had been brought up to believe this photo represented the Christmas dinner or if he knew more than I did. "Yes, but this photo, it wasn't taken indoors, can you tell me where it might have been taken?". "Of course", he exclaimed, "this photo was taken in the Oratory, I will show you".



View of the Oratory behind the Santa Maria di Constantinopoli immediately after the war.

He brought me outside to the Oratory, a courtyard just outside the church. He gestured around the square and told me this is where the tables in the photograph were set up. He continued that TWO Christmas dinners had been served that day. The Seaforth's were served inside the church, but there were others that were served simultaneously outside! The photograph was of the second dinner in the Oratory. Hence the confusion.

The Director told me that during the war, the courtyard was surrounded by taller buildings that sheltered it from any incoming fire from the north. To the south, adjacent to the sea, the church was protected by an old fortress wall that no longer exists. In 1960, the Oratory was converted into a children's playground for the students at the school. The wall was torn down to create more space. He diagrammed where the Christmas dinner table had been set up relative to the wall which had been torn down.

Studying the photograph, I discovered that the olive trees hanging just above the Christmas dinner are still there. Even the cracks in the concrete appeared to be in the same place relative to the trees. I felt quite sure that that I was standing on the spot where Ernie Bagstad and the others had eaten and were photographed. Jubilant as I was, I wanted further proof.

The conclusion of Karen's long journey to determining the truth behind the photograph will be in the next issue of "The Bulletin".

Sea King Helicopters Celebrate Golden Jubilee

By Christine Hines, Shearwater Aviation Museum

Best regards from the waterfront to all who have flown, fixed, controlled, supplied, carried in your DDHs and AORs or in other ways have had anything to do with the venerable CH-124 Sea King helicopter over the last 50 years.



On the afternoon of August 1st, 1963, two CHSS-2 Sea Kings “landed on” for the first time at the then HMCS Shearwater Naval Air Station. The lead helicopter was flown by the HS 50 Squadron CO at the time, Lieutenant Commander Ted Fallen, and was copiloted by none other than then-Lieutenant Colin Curleigh, who tells a very funny story about “who” was actually flying the machine. That one will be for the retelling at the planned reunion in 2013. Join us in Halifax and 12 Wing Shearwater from 31 July – 31 August 2013, for all of the planned ceremonies and activities to celebrate a truly magnificent aircraft in the RCAF's inventory.

The Sea King 50th Anniversary Association (SK50) is a non-profit organization, registered in Nova Scotia, to promote awareness of the CH-124 Sea King helicopter and its contributions to Canadian Maritime military aviation history.

The SK50 Committee is comprised of a diverse group of dedicated volunteers assembled to plan and coordinate commemorative events and projects for the Sea King's 50th anniversary year of 2013, including supporting the Shearwater Aviation Museum's (SAM) efforts to acquire a CH-124 Sea King helicopter and related exhibit and education projects.

This is all about a helicopter which has made such a tremendous contribution to aviation in Canada. It pioneered the large helicopter-small ship combination. It has contributed so much to Canada and elsewhere around the world, whether it was flood relief on the Prairies, earthquake relief in Haiti, anti-piracy and anti-drug running operations today or daring rescues at sea.



Photo credit: Capt. Norm Hanley, Op Nanook, 2011



Photo credit: Sgt Bruno Cayouette, RIMPAC 2012

It is quite a story and we want you to be part of it, as we celebrate this wonderful helicopter's history and ongoing contributions to Canada and Canadians. For more information on this event, please visit our website at www.seaking50.ca

“Clicking” Through Air Defence Computer History

By Bethany Aitchison, Canadian Forces Museum of Aerospace Defence

We all know how technology evolves over the decades and how dramatically the same ideas can change from its inception to modern day. As we cruise around on our iPhones or tablets with the touch of a finger, we have moved beyond even the trusty computer mouse, which was the descendant of the track ball. But even before the track ball, the Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) computer in the Underground Complex used a unique tool to select targets.

This is a ‘light gun’ – the common wording for a photoelectric signaling device used to trigger computer programming actions within SAGE. It is the size of a small handgun and is attached to the radar console by a thick cable. The air defence technician would point the tip of the light gun on a ‘blip’ on the screen, and when the ‘blip’ lit up with each pulse of data sent into the system, the gun would register the signal as a location of interest on the screen. From there, the technicians would be able to track aircraft and monitor their location, altitude and identification status.

It may sound odd to us in the twenty-first century, but this was revolutionary technology. Light guns were created exclusively for SAGE after the original idea of using a joystick turned out to be too awkward and slow to zero in on a target on screen. This technology was used from the opening of the UGC in 1963 until the system was replaced in 1983.



An air defence technician uses his light gun to select a target on his screen.



Light gun owned by CFMAD.

One downfall of the light gun, however, was that holding the device and a cigarette at the same time was rather easy. According to former SAGE air defence technicians, it wasn't uncommon for the round screens to have smudges or burns on them from the end of the cigarette hitting the screen as they pointed the light gun at the ‘blips’ on the screens. This comes as little surprise, since the SAGE console itself has both an ashtray and cigarette lighter built into it.

Featured Artifacts!



Crucifix - First World War

The Army Museum - Halifax Citadel

This figure of Christ was found in a room in a ruined house in Cite de Moulin, a suburb of Lens. The walls of the room were shattered with bullets as was the cross on which the Christ figure was affixed. The figure was not marred, save one hand. It was sent from France by Lieutenant C.J. Ketchum who was Canadian Field Artillery noting "If the figure could speak it could tell sad tales".



Champagne Bottle - First World War

The King's Own Calgary Regimental Museum

After the Battle of Vimy Ridge, a group of French farmers approached Sgt. A.A. Blaine of the 50th Battalion and presented him with a bottle of Champagne in honour of the great Canadian victory. In turn Sgt. Blaine gave it to the officers of the Battalion with a request: the bottle was to be opened on the 100th anniversary of the battle to commemorate the gallant efforts of the 50th Battalion - one of the primary assault battalions in the taking of Hill 145 on April 10th and the subsequent capture of the Pimple on April 12. The question is, "Should we open it"?



Handmade Cribbage Board with Pegs

Royal Alberta Museum

Private Arnold Betts (MM) found the piece of wood that he used to make the cribbage board, while exploring the ruins of the Ypres Cathedral Tower. He used a hot wire to burn the holes for the pegs. The brass pegs are stored in the holes found at either ends of the board. Years later Betts used the board to teach his granddaughter to play cribbage. The cards were purchased in Canada prior to the war.

A Wealth of Information for OMMC Members

Compiled by Bethany Aitchison from a letter from Dr Ernst Schmidt via Dick Malott

Dr Ernst Schmidt is a renowned historian and OMMC Honourary Lifetime Member. He is the former Director of the Central Military History Museum of the Federal Armed Forces of Germany (Bundeswehr) in Rastatt Castle, former officer in charge of the military history museums (3) and collections (27) at the Military History Research Office of the Bundeswehr and the former Director of the museums and collections of the Margrave of Baden.

He has participated in 13 annual OMMC museum studies programmes and delivered many lectures at these events on the following topics:

- 1987 – Ottawa – “The Bundeswehr Approach to Military History Museums: Its Operational System, Scientific Contents and Educational Aims”
- 1988 – St Jean – Lectures on tank preservation, military vehicle restoration, mannequin construction, diorama preparing and refined identification of weapons from the 18th century at US Fort Ticonderoga
- 1989 – Ottawa – “The Central Military History of the Federal Armed Forces at Rastatt (Castle): A Survey of Some of 27 Military History Collections”
- 1990 – Borden – “The German Armour Museum and Other Armour Collections of the Federal Forces” and “Comparable Military History Collections of the Bundeswehr: Medical Service, logistics, Maintenance and Military Police”
- 1991 – Gagetown – “Comparable Military History Collections – Infantry and Artillery” and “Comparable Military History Collections – Air Force”
- 1992 – Kingston – “Early Military Equipment in Archaeology and Fort History” and “Decorations on Weapons and Equipment from 16th to 18th Century: Artists, Artisans or Craftsmen?”
- 1993 – Calgary – “Soldier’s Life in the 20th Century in Museological 3D – Presentations” and “A Tripartite Museum Project: Refurbishing the Battlefield Museum in El Alamein; Soldiering in the North Africa Campaign/Mediterranean” with Birgit Schreiber-Schmidt on “The Vikings from the Museological Sight”
- 1995 – Shearwater – “The Museum of Capitulation (8-5-1945) at Berlin-Karlshorst,” “The German-Soviet Relations \between 1947 – 1990”, “The War 1941-1945: Victories, Defeats, Unconditional Surrender, Nazi Doctrine, Politics and the Abuse of the Soldier”
- 1996 – Arnprior – “Flags in Presentation, in Storage and in Restoration”
- 1997 – Victoria – “Relations Between British and German Military Music – Reflections and Reminiscences”
- 1998 – Winnipeg – “Relations Between British and German Military Music from Wellington to the Wilhelmine Era”
- 1999 – Gagetown – “Martial Music” and “Motorization and Modernization in 3D Museum Displays”
- 2000 – Kingston – “Motorization and Modernization in Military Museological 3D Displays – Examples Right and False from Museums Worldwide”, “Relations Between British and German Military Music – The Pre-WWI Years and the Great War”

Dr Schmidt says he still fondly looks at photo albums and souvenirs from these many OMMC Programmes and these “source of reminiscences” could, in due time, become part of the official collection of the OMMC. In addition to this wealth of information provided in lectures, he has also identified countless military artifacts from museums across Canada and even arranged the transfer of objects from Europe to Canadian museums. If anybody would like to engage Dr Schmidt and his expertise with identification or research of artifacts, he can be reached my mail, with photos of the artifacts, in Germany. His address is:

Dr. Ernst-Heinrich Schmidt
Obere Schußbach 5
76532 Baden-Baden
Germany

Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Head Raddall, DSO (Part I)

Submitted by: Don Zorniak, Royal Winnipeg Rifles Museum

While working on the collection in the Museum, I came across some little known regimental history. Most of people I spoke to had little or no knowledge of the only Commanding Officer of the Rifles to have been killed in action. The museum's collection has his uniform, medals, prayer book as well as other personal effects which were donated by the Raddall family in 1979.



Thomas Head Raddall was born in Cornwall, England in 1877. At the age of 14 he enlisted in the Royal Marines as a drummer in 1891. He became a rifleman in the Royal Marine Light Infantry in 1895 and served on the China station from 1896-1900. Raddall transferred to the British army's School of Musketry at Flythe, Kent as an instructor in small arms, including machine guns. An expert marksman, he was a member of army rifle teams in competitions at Bisley and elsewhere. He was a member of the British rifle team at the 1908 Olympic Games in London.

He inevitably transferred to the Canadian army in May 1913 for the purpose of being an instructor in rifle and machine gun practice. He and his family settled in Nova Scotia. When war was declared with Germany in August 1914, He was ordered to Valcartier Camp, where he joined 8th Battalion (the Winnipeg Rifles) as lieutenant of the machine gun section, then to overseas deployment in September of 1914.

At Ypres, in April of 1915 he was wounded in head and arm. He convalesced in Canada at Halifax (his adopted home city). Upon recovery, he rejoined the regiment with the rank of captain, and was adjutant during the Somme fighting in 1916.

While engaged at Vimy Ridge in the spring of 1917 he was wounded for a second time. He recovered in time to rejoin the regiment for the battle of Passchendaele, where he served as a major and was second-in-command. For his services during the battles of 1917 he was three times mentioned in Field-Marshal Haig's dispatches.

He took command of the regiment, after the brutal decimation at Passchendaele, as acting Lieutenant Colonel and was confirmed in this rank in August 1918. During this period he rebuilt and retrained the 8th battalion, and the 8th was acknowledged in First Division as being one of the best to wear the famous "old red patch".

On the 3rd of June 1918 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. Interestingly enough the award was given in honour of King George V's birthday. The criteria for the award were to have been in active combat as well as having been mentioned in dispatches.

(Part II to appear in the Summer 2013 issue of "The Bulletin".)



Medal set of LCol Raddall, including his DSO.

Comox is a Community in Bloom

By Capt Lynn Barley, Comox Air Force Museum

Communities in Bloom is a Canadian non-profit organization committed to fostering civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community involvement and the challenge of a national program, with the focus of green spaces in community settings."

This year, 19 Wing Comox participated in the "Communities in Bloom" challenge as part of the Canadian Forces Sustainable Communities Initiative. Participants were evaluated on the following: Tidiness, Environmental Action, Heritage Conservation, Urban Forestry, Landscape— including floral displays, and Turf and Sports Fields.

The Comox Air Force Museum was judged under the Heritage Conservation category and received a score of 127 out of a total possible 150 points. The judges noted that "CFB Comox is extremely strong in the Heritage Conservation criterion. Many exciting projects and programs all contribute to making CFB Comox a leader in its interest in not only preserving but in the promotion of its heritage.

As Jon Ambler, Museum Curator, so aptly said, "Heritage is about people, without people there would be no heritage". He and his legions of volunteers at the museum further exemplify the accomplishments that can be achieved when people work in a goal oriented direction. The museum and the Heritage Air Park were wonderful places to visit. Congratulations on this criterion. Your facilities and presenters make CFB Comox very strong in this criterion."

The Organization of Military Museums of Canada

Executive

Stuart Beaton: Acting President	stuart.beaton@forces.gc.ca
Dave Stinson: Secretary	davelach@telus.net
Richard Ruggle: Treasurer	shepherd@kw.igs.net

Directors

Don Manley	maridon31@gmail.com
Bethany Aitchison	bethany.aitchison@live.ca
Eric Ruel	eric.ruel@cfsj.qc.ca
Greg Gallant	greggallant@pei.sympatico.ca

'The Bulletin' is the official publication of the Organization of Military Museums of Canada.
The editor is Bethany Aitchison. Articles can be submitted to bethany.aitchison@live.ca.