



The 709 Communicator
 The Magazine of 709 (Toronto) Communications Regiment
 Vol 2: Issue 3
 December 2006
 Winter Edition



**Toronto Police Traffic Services Partners
 with Military Communications**

“We have a great deal of respect for what they do.” *Insp. Len Faul*

Traffic Services celebrated their partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces last month as neighbours, colleagues and friends.

Traffic Services has established professional links to 709 (Toronto) Communications Regiment at Fort York Armoury, located just south of the Gardner Expressway.

“We have a great deal of respect for what they do,” said Inspector Len Faul, of the regiment that specializes in tactical and strategic communication, employing voice, electronic and telecommunications systems. Many of the regiment’s members have served in various peacekeeping missions around the world. “They’ve got skills that are invaluable should we be in a situation like the city-wide blackout in 2003.

Former member, Greg Stasyna, is the Commanding Officer of the Regiment, and the Toronto Police Service honoured the work of the Canadian Forces with a ceremony in late June. Currently, TPS has 42 active reservists and 150 former military members in its ranks, many of whom have worked in peacekeeping and training missions across the globe from Somalia to Kosova to Afghanistan.

(Story and photo courtesy of *Inside the TPS*)

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

- Toronto Police and 709: Partners in Service to the Community
- CO’s Comments
- Hon Col’s Comments
- Padre’s Corner
- Change of RSM
- Change of Editors
- Remembrance Day Parade
- War Brides—a trip down memory lane by Mrs. Phyllis Cummings
- BMQ—Summer 2006 graduates
- The Devil’s Brigade Gets Bronze Star for service in WWII
- 2605 Signals Cadets — Annual parade
- Toronto Signals Band performs at Fort Henry Tattoo
- Regimental Asn Meets at RCMI
- Obituaries: Capt. Charles Dicky, LtCol Fred and Marion Robinson, Capt Ernest Stein



Capt Greg Stasyna CD

Commanding Officer's Comments

I would like to start off my message by focusing on the recent events with operations for the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan. The CF has certainly seen its share of trauma from the recent deaths and injuries of Canadian Soldiers. It is extremely high profile. Every Canadian citizen that I encounter has an opinion about the efforts of the CF with respect to this mission. We are blessed with the safe return of Cpl Won-Ho Kim who has recently returned from that theatre. Two other members of the Regiment are in Afghanistan including Lt Alfred Lai and Cpl Helena Major. I am sure that everyone within the Regimental family will extend their prayers and wishes for a safe return for both of these soldiers and for all of our members posted to both domestic and foreign operations.

The Regiment has been very busy over the past six months. We have participated in numerous exercises and operations. Additionally, many of our troops were tasked out through the summer period to facilitate operations and training in bases such as CFB Shilo and Kingston. We also sent support to domestic operations including support to the BC Forest Fires. One of the highlights over the summer was the annual summer military concentration Vigilant Guardian 06. This year I had the privilege of being the Commanding Officer of 3 Signals Sqn which operated under 3 Multi National Brigade Group. 709 played a distinct role along with our sister units from 70 Communication Group, 2 Area Support Group Signals, 2 CMBG Signals and staffs from the G6 branches of 31, 32 and 33 Brigade Group Headquarters. I would also like to thank of our signallers who attended this exercise. Major Lloyd and Captain Steve Kiss (both former CO's) played important roles within the exercise.

On a sad note, I must acknowledge the passing of one of our former Commanding Officers. LCol Fred Robinson passed away in September. As some of you remember Fred was the CO of 8 Signal Regiment in 1959, the predecessor of 709. On behalf of the Regiment, I would like to express our condolences to Fred's family. He will be sorely missed by the Regimental family.

We have a new Regimental Sergeant Major. MWO April White has now taken over the job. MWO Marcel Mallia leaves us after many years of service. MWO Mallia will be transferring to 700 Communications Squadron at CFB Borden as the new Squadron Sergeant Major.

I would like to extend my gratitude to our honorary team. Honorary Colonel Sally Horsfall and Lt Colonel Jack Lee continue to provide myself and the Regiment with their tireless support. Both have provided me with advice and insight that helps me with my command and leadership for our Regiment.

There will be new and continuing challenges stretching into the new year. As I enter my second year as Commanding Officer, I am pleased to announce that our Regiment strengthens. However, there is still much work to be done to ensure the sustainability of the Regiment along with ensuring a success plan for leadership. The efforts from everyone will ensure that these goals are achieved.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank rank and file members of our Regiment. Without them, the Regiment would not function. This thanks also extends to our wider Regimental family including the 2605 Cadet Corps, Jimmy and Associates, the Hong Kong Ex Serviceman's Association, the Flag Party, Regimental Advisory Council and the outstanding work that is done by the Toronto Signals Band.

*Greg Stasyna CD
Commanding Officer
709 Communications Regiment
Spiritus Manet*

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This is a limited production, domestic publication produced with the permission of the Commanding Officer for the purpose of recording the activities within the Regiment and the Regimental family. It is intended to provide a wide variety of material relating to military communications and military affairs, both at home and abroad.

**709 (Toronto)
Communication Regiment**

Capt. G.J. Stasyna, CD CO

Capt. H. Buller CD
Adjt

MWO April White CD
RSM

Col. S. Horsfall RN SSSJ
Hon. Col. and Chair of the Regimental Advisory Council

LCol. Jack Lee CD
Hon LCol and Unit Historian

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THE 709 COMMUNICATOR

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Editor

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Editor's Comments:

I am honoured to have been asked to take over the responsibilities of being the editor of the 709 Communicator. I thank Eric Cozens for all his hard work. I can only hope that I can meet your high standards. I would also thank

Hon. LCol Jack Lee, and the padre Capt. Fred Butler-Cauchie for their drive and dedication. Without them, this publication would not have come into being.

This newsletter exists to link all the various parts of the Regimental family and by doing so, to help foster that incredible sense of belonging for us all. But without you – *yes, I mean YOU* -- the person who is holding these pages and reading these words - I face a very difficult task. I cannot do it all myself! I must have your help to write the articles and take the photos telling of your experiences as a member of the Regiment, the Band, Jimmy & Associates, Flag party, Hong Kong Veterans, Signals Cadets and all of the messes. You don't have to be a professional writer. I can help you with that. I can also tell you how to take good photos that can be used here.

I cannot guarantee that everything you write, or every photo you take will be published because I have a limited amount of space in each edition. I may, as the editor, have to say 'no' to a particular piece that is submitted for my consideration. But it is virtually impossible to say 'yes' to one that is never sent.

My policy is that the editor's door is always open because I don't have one. But for now, I want everything you can send me. Drop it off with the Padre, or in the orderly room addressed to me, or send it by e-mail to me directly at editor709@yahoo.ca Be sure to include your name and how I can contact you.

MWO Steven Brickenden CD
Editor

SPIRITUS MANET





MWO April White CD

FROM THE RSM:

It's hard to believe that it was over a month ago that I took over. The memories of the dine-out dinner; parade and reception are all still very vivid and fresh in my mind. For those that we able to attend the parade, I am sure you will agree that the Regiment shone; the drill was sharp and our parade was perfectly choreographed with the melodies played by our fabulous Signals Band.

It was wonderful to have former CO's, RSM's and members at the parade. These are important events for the Regiment as they add to our rich Regimental history and equally important, is how these events strengthen of our Regimental family bond. Truly, we are a family; each member is important and plays a vital role in the health and sustainability of the Regiment. . I couldn't be more

pleased or proud of this Unit and as I mentioned on the parade, it is an honour and privilege to be the RSM and I look forward to the next few years.

I have set long and short-term objectives for my tenure as the RSM. Goal-setting and planning is something I have done this in virtually every position I have held in the Regiment. It is essential as it maps out a path forward and helps to identify issues and tasks that need to be dealt with and undertaken along the way in order to achieve success. Of course one can plan all they like but the plan will never come to fruition unless there is support from the Regimental family. I am very fortunate to have highly talented and dedicated serving members and a wonderful Regimental family to work with so I have every confidence that, in working together, we will make memories and positive change.

My three key goals, in very general terms, are to: rejuvenate the social spirit of the Regiment (including our Mess); strengthen our relationship and communications with the Regimental family and 32 Brigade units; and facilitate NCO professional development and succession planning. As you may be aware, there are new policies that are directly impacting serving members with respect to career planning and training. I will ensure that these policies are conveyed and appropriately implemented so that staff can make timely decisions and plan accordingly. Career management has always been the job of the RSM and remains one of the most important tasks; particularly in this climate of change within the CF. I will be proactive and creative in personnel management issues and will strive to implement effective solutions that will benefit individuals and the Regiment.

It is important for me to also convey my sincere gratitude to the Regimental family who has been so supportive of me over the last several years. Thank you for your encouragement, kindness and faith. To the Signals Band, Flag Party members, 2605 Cadet Corps, Jimmy and Associate Members, Hong Kong Veterans Association, I look forward to getting better acquainted with you and working together. To the Honourary Colonels, you have done an outstanding job supporting the Regiment and your tireless efforts are greatly appreciated. To you, the serving members, you are the operational foundation of 709 and it is the combined efforts of everyone's talents and energy that make us the outstanding Regiment we are today. Keep up the good work.

MWO April White, CD

RSM

Spiritus Manet

War Brides Story – Mrs. Phyllis Cummings Part I

The Year 2006 was unofficially declared the Year of the War Brides. Jimmy and Associates is fortunate to have Phyllis Cummings that falls into this category. This is Phyllis Cummings story: 1939 to 2005

The day that Mr. Chamberlain announced on the radio, Sunday 3rd September 1939, “We are now at War with Germany”, I remember going into our front room which faced South to the English Channel about 25 miles away and thinking, when will the bombers be coming. I was 15 years old. Everybody had to get blackout material to cover all windows, and make sure that no light showed after dark. All street lights were turned off. We were issued with gas masks, identity cards and ration books. The Army camp near us went active and regiments from all parts of the country were sent there. After the fall of France in 1940, we thought that we would be invaded. We were being bombed night and day, and the RAF was flying all the time shooting down as many of the bombers as possible. The bombing continued through June to September 1940 officially now known as The Battle of Britain.



Phyllis & Jay Cummings

I did not have to join up. I was working in a canteen at a sawmill that was doing war work, so I was exempt. Soon we had clothes, rationing and coupons, not many, so had to ‘make do’ and mend. In the summer we would use pancake make up on our legs as stockings were hard to get. Several of my girlfriends and I had a small room offered to us, where we had a piano, table tennis, cards, and a small stage where we could put on little plays or ‘skits’. Some of the soldiers that were stationed in the area soon started to come by every night. We would make tea and serve cookies when we could scrounge some from our Mums. That is where I met ‘Jay’ Cummings, who was a Signaller attached to headquarters of a tank regiment.

We started to date every night that he could leave camp. The doodle bugs, Flying bombs were now being sent over the Channel and on a map that I have nine fell in Crowborough. One night in July 1944, as we said goodnight at the front gate, Jay said as he left ‘see you tomorrow night’ but he did not show up the next night and it was not until the next day we found out that the troops had all left to go to France. They had all known but could not tell anyone.

We kept in touch by letters and when the war ended he asked me to marry him. His first leave when he came to England was May 1945 and he was 20 years old. We were married on October 6, 1945. He came back to Canada May 1946. I sailed to Canada in August 1946 on the Lady Nelson. The girls were all amazed at all the food, especially the ‘white bread’. When we docked at Pier 21, a band was playing and we all tried to sing O Canada, but not too sure of the words yet.

After going through immigration and location our luggage we got on the “big” train to our final destinations. I was going to Belleville, Ontario, so had a good chance to see many girls off the train into the waiting arms of their husbands and wonder what it would be like when it was my

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

turn. We arrived in Belleville at 2:30 AM and Jay was there to meet me. In our first kiss and hug my new hat fell off and was nearly trampled. It had cost me 15 shillings!

I found out that Jay was not his proper name, it was Joe but there had been too many Joe's so he was dubbed Jay. We had a small apartment of our own until we could afford the down payment on a house in 1955. Our son was born November 4, 1948 and our daughter was born in 1959. Joe worked on construction work for a while and then he was employed with the CNR, eventually as a bridge inspector. He retired in 1980.

Belleville is a very nice city and we moved back here from our place in the country as it is more convenient now that we are older. We have been able to travel quite a bit in Canada and some of the US. I have had many trips to England. Looking back to the first years of my living in Canada it actually seems like a dream now. We were all so young and naïve those days. We had to grow up quickly and

I am sure that we made quite a few mistakes along the way but we have learned to give and take and did adjust to a way of life that was a bit strange at first. I had to get used to a wood burning stove and an icebox. And some of the sayings that we used were a bit "funny" I am sure to some people.

As Joe and I look forward to our 60th wedding anniversary this year, we are very thankful for the blessing that we have in our children, grandchildren and good friends that we have made along the years. As I look around I see so many people on their own now, we are so lucky to have each other. In December of 2005, we flew down to Halifax and a couple of friends met us and took us to Pier 21. It was a very enjoyable time spent there. All of the staff were very helpful and interested in finding out all we could remember about our arrival there. It is a very interesting Museum now and we hope to visit there again one day. We have been able to attend many War Brides Reunion held in Ontario and have just returned from one in Regina which was really very enjoyable.

Sometimes when things seem to go wrong and complain about the 'Golden Years'. But we have lots to be thankful for. So say "keep your pecker", I mean "chin up" and good luck to all.

My hometown is Crowborough, Sussex, UK

War Bride Part II will be continued in the Spring Edition of The 709 Communicator.

STEIN, Ernest (Ernie) Capt. WWII Vet.

Capt Stein passed away on October 10, 2006 at the age of 87. Ernie was former President of the Romford, England branch of the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen (AJEX), the National Parade Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of Canada, a member of the Royal Regiment of Canada, and Army Cadet League liaison to 2605 Royal Canadian Army (Signals) Cadets. Ernie was a long-time volunteer visitor to the Veteran's Wing at Sunnybrook Hospital and all who knew him will miss him.

TORONTO SIGNALS BAND

Another fiscal year has ended for the Toronto Signals Band. It was an important year for us being the 80th Year of Continued Operation another milestone in the achievements of this great Band.

It is a pleasure being associated with the 709 Communications Regiment and functioning as the duty Band. As you know our roots are military and it is an honour and a privilege to be able to volunteer and continue the wonderful relationship with the Regiment and writing new chapters of the memories, traditions and heritage of our Band.

It has been a busy year with 19 parades, 3 Shows, 3 Tattoos (*see story on the Fort Henry Tattoo*) and 6 other social events. The most significant being the 80th Celebration Dinner/Dance; deemed a major success.

It was a delight looking out from the podium and seeing representatives from the Regiment, alumni members from days gone by, long time friends of the Band, spouses, partners and Band members. Over 140 attendees helped us celebrate this joyous occasion. We received accolades from the Queen's Office, the Premiers of Canada and Ontario, the Mayor of Toronto and many others. The room was nostalgic with flags and many items of memorabilia.

We have been working hard to produce revenue in order to replace worn out tunics, pants and instruments. This year we had a set back having to purchase a new blouse, which emulates our tunic to do summer parades since we were having too many members dropping out, caused by heat exhaustion and dehydration. Of course all military type functions are full dress regardless of weather conditions.

We are always looking for new members if for no other reason than to lower our average age (just joking). If you have friends or associates who would be interested in playing in a Band please have them get in touch with us or have a look at our website www.torontosignals.com for more information.



Music skills and knowledge are a benefit but not necessary, we will teach them.

The Warrior's Day Parade this year was certainly an honour for Toronto Signals Band to be asked to lead the parade in commemoration of our 80th year. It was such a proud feeling playing "John Peel" marching through the Prince's Gates and rekindling memories of many veterans.

With Remembrance Day approaching let us reflect back to the passing of those who gave their lives for the betterment of the World and this wonderful Country we live in.

"Lest We Forget"
Thank you
Orton (Ortie) Beaumont
President
Toronto Signals Band

As the holiday season draws near, we can't help but think of all the men and women who serve our country both here and abroad. Particularly, I think of the reserve soldier, the citizen soldier, who is also the person next door, or at the next desk, or lumbering beside me. I think also of the lack of certain services or equipment or amenities that soldier experiences when down on the armoury floor – and how we can assist those needs.

Every year the Honoraries on behalf of the Regimental Advisory Council write to friends of 709 and ask for donations to help the regiment. Last year almost \$8,000.00 was generously given to assist with both the unit fund and necessary improvements for the JR's, Sgt's & WO's Mess and Officers' Mess.

This year we ask again. As the new Director General of Reserves & Cadets Commodore Vic Tremblay says – “It costs a lot of money to fly tanks to Afghanistan and there won't be much money left for extras” so please send along whatever you can. It is the \$20 and \$50 and \$100 that make up the \$8,000.00 so, please drop a cheque in the mail c/o LCol John Hughes, 709 Regimental Advisory Council, 70 Mikado Cres, Brampton, ON L6S 3R7. He will send you a tax receipt, but more importantly a GREAT BIG THANK YOU.

Best wishes to all at 709 for a Healthy & Happy Holiday Season.



Biography of CWO John Speirs, MMM, CD

CWO (RSM) (Retired) John Speirs was born in Sydney Mines, N.S. and moved to Montreal in his early teens. He began a long and distinguished career (36 years) in the Communications Reserve when he joined 10th Signal Regiment in October 1952. He later served with 11th Signal Regiment, 15th Independent Signal Sqn and 712 (Montreal) Communication Sqn. He held the appointment of SSM of three of these units for 16 years.

CWO Speirs was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer in January 1973, the first CWO to be promoted to a Reserve Communication Squadron in Canada. In 1977 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Military Merit, being formally invested into the Order in ceremonies at Government House, Ottawa, on 22 November 1977. In the rank of MWO he served, as a reservist, with the NATO forces in Baden Soellingen, West Germany in June 1972.

In January 1978, CWO Speirs transferred to 709 (Toronto) Communication Regiment and held the position of Assistant Training Officer. He was appointed RSM of the Regiment in March 1979 and held that position for 8 years. In addition to his duties as RSM he was appointed the first Squadron



CWO (Retd) John Speirs

(Continued on page 14)

As I walked down the front rank of the Regiment on that last day, my mind went back to the first day. In 1978, a young 15 year old was looking for a way to avoid housework and his parents, when a friend and tells him all about an organization called the “Cadets”. Not knowing what to expect, down to Fort York Armoury I went to find all these young kids in uniform yelling and screaming to each other on this big indoor basketball court (Parade Square). I was introduced to two gentlemen, Mr. Jack Lee and Mr. Greg Hinds. The recruiting process happens almost instantaneously as they start sizing me for a uniform and helping me to fill out an application.

The next parade night I was down with all my papers signed and a young tall guy in a sharp uniform with a stick under his arm, (Cadet RSM John Kemp), walked over to me and said, “Right Marker” and with those two words the rest of my career as a Cadet and Junior NCO was almost laid out for me.

In 1981, I followed the lead of many cadets before me and I joined the Regiment. It was a surprisingly smooth transition. In about ten minutes, I went from being sworn in by the CO in his office, to the classroom for my QL1 Radio course. I graduated but it was obvious to me that working in a box on the back of a truck was not for me. But there was a light shining ahead and it was off to Kingston to become a Lineman, a trade I have held ever since. I guess 18 year-olds do occasionally make the right decisions.

Without going into all the little details of my career with the Regiment, to say that I had a great time would be an understatement. There have been good times and bad, but the many life long friends that I have made have made it all worthwhile. I have had the honour to serve under some great Senior NCO s and Officers. CWO John Spiers, CWO (later Capt) Steve Kiss, and LCol Jack Lee, are just some of the memories that will live with me for the rest of my life.

In March 2001, I was appointed to the prestigious position of Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) for 709 Toronto Communication Regiment and with this appointment came many other duties that people do not see on a regular basis. There was an immense amount of paperwork, countless parades, mess dinners, conference, working groups, exercises, parade nights, admin nights, merit boards, etc., etc., etc. The job calls for all of this, and much more.

One of the ‘much mores’ that I’m most proud of came while I was the RSM of the day, the Communication Branch 100th Anniversary. Another was when The Regiment paraded downtown Toronto exercising their right of Freedom of the City celebrating the Anniversary. These are once-in-a-lifetime events that no other RSM of 709 will ever be able to take with them when they leave. Another came when I sat at my computer answering the many e-mails that one gets. It was from one of my soldiers serving overseas. I have always tried to keep in touch as much as possible, and the young corporal had answered my e-mail by telling me that my contacting *him* was an honour. The honour was mine for being in a position to be called their leader. These young men and women, who go to such far away places and place their lives in harm way to help others, are the ones that I call ‘honourable’.

I didn’t do this alone. No RSM ever can and I would be remiss if I did not publicly thank our cleri-



MWO Marcel Mallia CD

(Continued on page 10)

“Don’t Say Hello”

By Colonel Paul Randall, MBE TD of Corfe Castle

I worked in the 8th Army HQ Signal Office for four years. The original staff, were mainly ex-GPO and had served since 1939.

However, in Italy in 1943 we were receiving reinforcements from the UK who did not match up to the ‘old sweats’. In particular, the telephone operators would insist on saying “Hello”. I impressed on all duty signal masters that they must suppress this civilian habit.

Field Marshal Alexander visited our HQ frequently, but always set up his own HQ a mile or so from Army HQ. We had to establish communication with him straight away. I was in our Signal Office one day and heard the duty signal master say “Don’t say hello. Give me your name, rank and number”. Back came the reply “My name is Alexander, my rank is Major General, my number is (so and so). Who the hell are you?”

It is the only time that I have ever seen anyone turn white!



*Lt. Alfred Lai
(above with
his wife)
And
MCpl
Helena Major
currently
serving in
Afghanistan.*



(Continued from page 9)

cal staff for all their hard work and help they provided me during my 5 plus years as the RSM. Their dedication and hard work is why unit personnel are able to go on courses and deploy on taskings while keeping the COs and myself out of jail.

I looked into the faces of some of the young people who entered the ranks of the Regiment and become great soldiers and persons. These individuals are very bright and unselfish, giving most of their time to their comrades and subordinates, often forgetting to take time for themselves and their families. Sometimes, you place these individuals in a job, which they don’t believe they can do, and when they do an outstanding job, it makes you proud to have been involved in their careers. I looked directly at Rob Carter, Dave Asals, and Sevan Mardirosian, just to mention a few, and I would like to thank you for allowing me the pleasure of having been involved in your years with the Regiment.

As I finished my walk past the formation on that September afternoon, a touch of sadness came upon me. The Unit that I’ve called my own for so many years was no longer mine. Yet, at the same time, I was the proudest soldier on that parade square for knowing that you will, as you always have in the past, take all those tasks thrown at you and do an outstanding job.

With that I will keep in touch and be vigilant of OUR REGIMENT.

Thank you.

Marcel Mallia,

RSM 709, 2001-2006 VVV

Army Awards Bronze Star to Canadian 'Devil's Brigade' Vets

American Forces Press Service

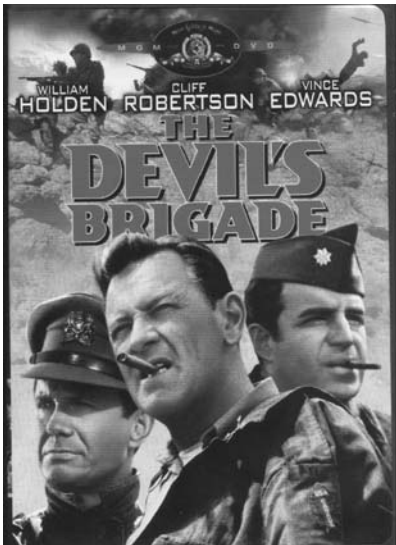
WASHINGTON, Aug. 18, 2006 - The U.S. Army has authorized award of the Bronze Star Medal for Service to the living Canadian veterans of the 1st Special Services Force for their service during World War II. The unit was known as "the Devil's Brigade" during the war and was one of the first U.S. special operations forces units in the war. The unit included U.S. Army soldiers and soldiers of the 2nd Canadian Parachute Battalion and 2nd Canadian Special Service Battalion of the Special Operations Group.

From 1942 to 1944, about 2,500 soldiers served in the unit under U.S. Army command. Members from both nations were assigned interchangeably to the squad level and below. The Canadians wore U.S. Army uniforms and carried American weapons. The unit deployed to the Aleutian Islands in 1943 and then moved to Italy. The force participated in actions at the Anzio beachhead, the liberation of Rome and into southern France. The unit took so many casualties that officials disbanded it in January 1945. In 1968, a movie was made about the Special Service Force, starring William Holden, Vince Edwards, and Cliff Robertson.



The unit earned the name the Devil's Brigade during the Italian Campaign from words found written in the diary of a dead German officer: "The black devils are all around us every time we come into line and we never hear them."

The award of the Bronze Star Medal for Service is a conversion award of the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) authorized for almost 1,200 Canadian veterans in 2005. Under Army policies, only CIB and Combat Medic Badges awarded during World War II may be converted to the Bronze Star Medal for Service. "This is an added award to these Canadian veterans," said Shari Lawrence, a spokeswoman for the Army's Human Resources Command.



Force veterans met in Helena, Montana, August 25, 2006 for their last reunion. "It's only fitting we make this announcement this week," Lawrence said. The unit trained in at Helena's Fort William Henry Harrison before leaving for war. Eligible veterans may send their request and copies of their verification documents to: U.S. Army Human Resources Command; 200 Stovall Street, ATTN: AHRC-PDO-PA; Alexandria, VA 22332-4000.

DVD available from MGM 1968



Padre's Corner

Padre Fred Butler-Caughie

Letters from the Front

CHAPLAIN'S WAR DIARY
CAMP JULIEN, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN
CAPT. JM SONIER, PADRE

Week 10 – 6 October to 12 October 03

During this week, daily routines and patrols were back to “normal” at Camp Julien, but a few people are still grieving the lost of the two Canadian soldiers that happened last week with the mine strike. Chaplains and Social Workers were involved in assisting these individuals in their dealing with the incident, and advised the Chain of Command on related issues. Three individuals were sent back home on Compassionate leave to help them cope with the traumatic event.

On Tues October 7, all members were gathered in Messes to watch the Memorial Service of Cpl Robbie Beerenfenger and Sgt Robert Short on television from Pembroke ON. This Service was presided by Padre Jacques Vaillancourt and Padre Graham Thompson (formerly of the Royal Regiment of Canada). It was an intense moment for us and we were very absorbed and silent during the whole Service. It was clear that people were still experiencing intense feelings of sadness, compassion and hope for their families and friends.

The roads where the incident took place have been closed since. In the meanwhile, the CO, LCol Denne, made the decision that we would provide armoured vehicles to troops who are patrolling some dangerous roads. It is not recommended for “soft skins” like Iltis to travel on these roads any more.

A few minor incidents also took place this week that has brought some nervous reaction and anxiety. A few individuals outside the gate fired several rounds to Camp Julien late on the evening of October 8.

Other than that, we participated in the Multinational Chaps Meeting that took place in KAIA. We also had the visit of Padre Catherine Morrison from Camp Mirage between October 6 to October 8. Padre Morrison is still part of the OP ATHENA Chaps team even though she is stationary in a different location. This was an opportunity for us to meet and to talk about issues that we are presently dealing with.

Last points. People were starting to get back from their leave this week. Padre Sonier went to Camp Warehouse on Sunday October 12 for a Roman Catholic Service that took place at 1900. Sunday was Thanksgiving Dinner at both Camps and we had the pleasure to enjoy Turkey and

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

Pumpkin pie that is traditional every year for all Canadians.

This Thanksgiving Diary Entry was composed three years ago by Canadian Chaplain Captain J.M. Sonier at Camp Julien, Kabul, Afghanistan. Thanks were given to God however as each individual viewed God to be (or not to be). Camaraderie drew each person closer as they shared a bit of down time, but also grieved for those who were not longer part of their community, those who had paid the supreme sacrifice.

Three Thanksgiving Days later, the scene is not all that different. Our men and women still attempt to share in the familiar, in the experiences that define community and ourselves as Canadians while in an environment that is hostile geographically, climatically, and certainly physically and psychologically as the Taliban seem to have an all permeating presence.

Three Thanksgivings from this Diary entry and dozens more Canadian and Afghanistan casualties and fatalities. I keep reading in the press how support for our mission in Afghanistan continues to erode amongst the Canadian populace. This is very much part of the political arena and so I leave this for the politicians to debate. My personal experience in my circle of influence has not been the same as I have read about.

Rather, I have witnessed a true sense of pride and support for our CF Members in whatever theatre they may be operating. While I write this at Thanksgiving, it is also a time of Remembrance for those who have fallen. These names have almost become sacred as they are repeated in their hometowns, written in the local press, as their stories are told by those who knew them in life.

I am thankful for all who have chosen to serve their country in the Canadian Forces both Regular and Reserve and for the sacrifices of their families. I count it a privilege to be able to serve with these fine young men and women. And I count it as my duty to remember those who have laid down their lives in service to this great nation.

Just now I give thanks to the following who gave up their lives in Afghanistan over the past four years. If I have missed anyone, please accept my deepest apologies

Corporal Jamie Brendan Murphy; Trooper Mark Wilson; Sergeant Craig Paul Gillam; Corporal Robert Thomas James Mitchell; Private Josh Klukie; Private David Byers; Mr. Glyn Berry; Private Braun Scott Woodfield; Sergeant Robert Alan Short; Corporal Robbie Christopher Beerenfenger; Corporal Glen Arnold; Corporal Shane Keating; Corporal Keith Morley; Private David Byers; Warrant Officer Richard Francis Nolan; Warrant Officer Frank Robert Mellish; Corporal Andrew James Eykelenboom; Master Corporal Jeffrey Scott Walsh; Master Corporal Raymond Arndt; Private Kevin Dallaire; Corporal Bryce Jeffrey Keller; Sergeant Vaughan Ingram; Corporal Christopher Jonathan Reid; Major Paeta Hess-von Kruedener; Corporal Francisco Gomez; Corporal Jason Patrick Warren; Corporal Anthony Joseph Boneca; Captain Nichola Goddard; Corporal Matthew Dinning; Bombardier Myles Mansell; Lieutenant William Turner; Private Robert Costall; Master-Corporal Timothy Wilson; Corporal Paul Davis; Private Braun Scott Woodfield; Sgt. Marc D. Léger; Cpl. Ainsworth Dyer; Pte. Richard A. Green; Pte. Nathan Smith.

*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD
AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM NOR THE YEARS CONDEMN
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM*



LCol Fred and Marian Robinson

- ◆ Marion deceased August 16, 2006
- ◆ Fred deceased September 11, 2006

Lt Col Fred Robinson and his wife Marian were profiled in last spring's edition of *The 709 Communicator*.

To feel the touch of the hand that is gone. To hear the sound of the voice that is still.

(Continued from page 8)

Sergeant Major of 70 Signal Squadron in 1979. He held that position during six summer concentrations when the Squadron was activated to support The Toronto Militia District with a Brigade Signal Squadron. This field Signal Squadron was formed from members of 709 (Toronto) Communication Regiment, 705 (Hamilton) Communication Squadron and 700 (Borden) Communication Squadron.

After his retirement from the Communications Reserve, he was active in The Canadian Forces Communications and Electronics Association Council and served as President in 1996 & 1997. The Council represented the Communication Association at the Conference of Defence Association. Since transferring to 709 John has been active in Jimmy and Associates, he has held positions of Secretary, Vice President, President in 1993-1995 and Treasurer. John is also a Director of The Warriors Day Council.

His business career was in the Business Publishing field. He was Business Manager of Canadian Business Magazine, Product Manager with The Financial Post now The National Post, Director of Circulation with Hume Publishing Ltd, Manager, Market Research with The Canadian Management Center. He is a founder and Past President of The Circulation Management Association.

John is now happily retired; he and his wife Eunice reside in Oakville. He is a member of the Oakville Amateur Radio Club (VA3 RSM), local computer club and an Officer in the Masonic Lodge.



**WELCOME TO
BMQ 2006—From left to right:**

Front row:

Pte Mensah, KS;

Pte Jothirajah, RM;

Pte Quintana-Escalona, GA

Back row:

2Lt Chan, FNC;

Pte Lau, KH;

Pte Berczynski, DJB;

Pte Bland, WA;

Pte Percival, MJ;

MWO Mallia, M

REMEMBRANCE DAY CHURCH PARADE PHOTOS

November 12, 2006



“With the band leading...”

The weather was cool and dry. The band was excellent as they marched to Leaside Presbyterian Church

*Capt Greg Stasyna
(CO) and
MWO April White
(RSM)
lead the Regiment as
it marches in
Remembrance Day
Parade, Nov 12/06*



*The Flag Parties Jimmy & Associates
and the
Hong Kong Veterans Association.*



*Capt Rick Leswick leads an impressive
2605 Signals Cadets*

The Toronto Signals Band at the Fort Henry Tattoo!

On July 29th the “Signals Band”, helped celebrate the Fort Henry National Historic Site’s 68th Anniversary in style with a full evening Military Tattoo.

Our day began with a 9:00 am bus pickup at ASU Toronto and a 3-hour ride along Lake Ontario to Barryfield, east of the Fort near Kingston. The weather was a serious concern as there had been some heavy rainfall, but it stopped just in time, and was fine for the rest of the day.

At Fort Henry our rehearsal time slotted for 4:00 pm. We formed up in the common area, just outside of the south wall of the Fort. We were able to run through

our music and drill, marching in threes across the moat to the parade square twice before making way for another Band to rehearse their show. Following a meal of hamburgers, hot dogs or sausage of a bun and salad, it was time to put on the “Scarlet”.

Our Brass section opened the show with a fanfare followed by a blast from one of the Fort’s cannons. Over the next few hours 8 units participated in the show, including the Fort Henry Guard Fifes and Drums, the RCMP Brass and Pipe Band and Dancers, the Band of the Ceremonial Guard, Parliament Hill, Ottawa and HMCS Ontario Sea Cadets Band. Both the Sea Cadet Band and the Band from Ottawa were comprised of talented young musicians from across Canada. Also in attendance were the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry Band, the Olde 78th Fraser Highlanders, the Rob Roy Pipe Band & Highland Dancers, the Communications and Electronics Garrison Band, and the Gun Crew of the Ceremonial Guard.

Signals were the second Band to perform, and I must say we did an excellent job, perhaps our best ever! The cheers and comments of the 3 to 4 thousand spectators during our presentation and again when we entered for the retreat, told us we had done a stellar performance at this very high profile event, and we had done ourselves and the Regiment “PROUD”!

We returned to our rooms by 11:30 pm, just in time to party, but breakfast came too early for some, before loading on the bus and heading for home, mission accomplished!



Birth of a Nation

BGen Alexander Ross
Battle of Vimy Ridge 1917

It was Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific on parade. I thought then, and I think today, that in those few minutes I witnessed the birth of a nation.

49th Annual Cadet Inspection



2605 Signals Cadets conducted their 49th Annual Inspection at Fort York Armoury on Saturday June 10th. This parade is done completely by the cadets without any of the officers actually being on the square. Under the direction of Cadet WO Kayla Brown, 31 cadets marched in with over 45 dignitaries and parents present. The Central Detachment, the Corps' next higher level of command, evaluates this parade, held each year at the end of the training session.

The reviewing party for this year had a large contingent of former cadets who have carried on their service to higher responsibilities. Capt Greg Stasyna, CO of 709 Comms Regt, HLCol Jack Lee, MWO Marcel Malia, RSM, Capt Rick Leswick CO of 2605 and Toronto Police SSgt Frank Besanthal are all former cadets. In the spectators were several recruits who joined the unit only days before the inspection. The pa-

rade was also a highlight for several cadets as promotions were done to corporal and master corporal and a representative of the Army Cadet League awarded Cadet WO Brown her Cadet Long Service medal for 4 years service.

As the cadets marched out, the sense of the Corps' past present and future went with them. In May 2007, the unit will mark its 50th Anniversary and plans are underway to hold this event on the grounds of the Old Fort, with a Corps that is twice its current size. Plan on being there!

MWO Steven Brickenden is the Ops & Trg O for 2605 Cadets.

ARE YOU A FORMER ARMY, NAVY OR AIR FORCE CADET *with 4 years of service?*
You may be eligible to receive the Cadet Long Service Medal. This award cannot be worn with CF dress uniform. Check with the Admin O of 2605Cadets if you have the documentation to support your cadet service.



Capt Stasyna presents a certificate to WO Kavanagh

MWO Ron Kavanaugh Retires

I started out as the DCO's driver in 1982 while posted to Calgary and was later posted to 3 Service Battalion as a Log Ops CP operator. In 1984 I was posted to Lahr Germany and served with the Royal Canadian Dragoons. During this posting I was a CRTTZ Operator and successfully completed my TQ5A during this tour in Kingston Ont. My tour was cut short in Germany when I was diagnosed with cancer and returned to St. John's Nfld in 1987. After a successful battle I was cleared of cancer and posted to 727 Comm Sqn St. John's where I also worked as a CRTTZ Op

and INMARSAT terminal. I received my MACS and FCC qualification with 727 Communication Sqn. I was then posted to CFB Petawawa in in 1993. While on tour in Petawawa I completed a tour in Bosnia where I was WSE Sgt. On completion of this tour I was then posted back to CFS St. John's as the LAN Manager in 1997 as a MCpl and posted to 709 Toronto on Aug 04 as a WO. I have completed 25 Years of service 9 Jul 2006 and I am retiring and taking up a Class B position at ASU Toronto.

I now reside in Mississauga with my wife Margo and our two children Megan and Taylor. We are enjoying Ontario very much and hope to keep in contact with 709 Communications Regiment family.

Captain Charles David Dickie

Died peacefully on Sunday **May 21, 2006** at home, in his 80th year with his loving family at his side. Beloved husband of Betty (Elizabeth) for 56 years. His careers took him from CGE to the CBC and a bio in the Canadian Broadcasting Association's "Who's Who of Canadian Broadcasting", and on to the infant CFTO. In the early 70's he turned his sights to the financial sector, becoming an investment broker and eventually a director of Yorkton Securities.

Dave's military involvement began with a short stint with the RCNVR in 1945. He later joined the 2nd Signal Regiment of Toronto later moving to the Toronto Scottish Regiment as a Communications Specialist. As an executive member of the Warriors' Day Parade Council, he organized judging for the annual CNE event for almost 20 years. He has maintained his membership in the Royal Canadian Legion, currently Branch 112, Whitby.



Dave was Charter President of the Kinsmen Club of West Hill. He was founding member of Cathedral Bluffs Yacht Club, serving as Commodore in 1985.

Family and friends were received at Mount Lawn Memorial Chapel, 21 Garrard Road, Whitby on Saturday May 27, 2006. *(The Globe and Mail. May 25 2006)*

Applying for a Civilian Job? The 709 Communicator offers the following plain English translations for some terms you will find in the job descriptions.

- "Competitive Salary" - *We remain competitive by paying you less than our competition.*
- "Join our fast-paced company" - *We have no time to train you.*
- "Casual work atmosphere" - *We don't pay you enough to expect that you will dress up; a couple of real daring guys wear ear rings.*
- "Some overtime required" - *Some every night and some every weekend.*
- "Must have an eye for detail" - *We have no quality control.*
- "Career-minded" - *Female applicants must be childless and remain that way. Male applicants should kiss their family life and free time goodbye.*
- "Apply in person" - *If we don't like the way you look, you'll be told that the job has been filled.*
- "Seeking candidates with a wide variety of experience" - *You'll need it to replace the three people who just quit.*
- "Problem solving skills" - *You're walking into perpetual chaos.*
- "Duties will vary" - *Anyone in the office can boss you around.*
- "Requires team leadership skills." - *You'll have the responsibilities of a manager without the pay or respect.*
- "Good communications skills" - *Management communicates, you listen, figure out what they want and then do it.*
- "Some travel" - *You'll be putting out fires wherever we have clients.*

GOOD LUCK

Exercise Vigilant Guard 2006



709 Toronto Communication Regiment participate in this year's summer military concentration known as Vigilant Guard 06 (VG 06). The exercise took place in August at CFB Petawawa. The unit participated within a composite organization that formed 3 Signals Squadron which consisted of elements from 709, 763 Comm Regiments, 700, 705 and 772 Comm Squadrons as well as elements from CFB Petawawa including 2 Signals along with elements from ASG Signals and the G6 branches of 31, 32, 33 Bdes. 3 Signals Squadron consisted of approximately

76 personnel.

Captain Greg Stasyna of 709 Communication Regiment was the CO of 3 Signals Sqn. The Squadron formed an integral part of 3 Multi-National Brigade (3 MNB). This Bde consisted of 3 separate task forces including 31, 32, and 33 TF. Other elements making up the Bde included Health Support Services with a field hospital, Engineers, a Company of Opposition Force which occupied a local high school in CFB Petawawa to run their operations out of. Over 2600 troops participated in the exercise.

The exercise was a shift from the previous three Stalwart Guardian exercises which focused on conventional Bde operations. VG 06 focused on Full Spectrum Operations (FSO) which the context of a 3 block war. VG This was the first year of a three year span of VG exercises. All operations were kept within the confines of the base. 3 Signals Squadron provided Information Tech-



nology, VHF radio, Landline and general headquarters support. Next year's exercise (Valiant Guardian 07) will take place next August.

PLAN NOW TO BE THERE!

Photos from around the country.



A British RAF Vulcan bomber now sits as a display at CFB Goose Bay Labrador.— photo courtesy of Ms. Solange De Santis

The next edition of the 709 Communicator is coming in June 2007.

Articles and/or photos can be submitted to editor709@yahoo.ca

Technical stuff: Articles should be written in MSWord format, Times New Roman font 12, single spaced.

Photos should be JPG format 3 x 5 inch approximate size and at least 170 dpi resolution. Include such information as to who is in the photo, where and when it was taken, who took it and what is happening in the picture. As I said in my comments, I cannot do this alone.

Steve Brickenden CD
Editor and generally in charge of a lot of things.