

The Torch

February 2015

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Menin Gate at Midnight

'Menin Gate at Midnight' painted by Australian artist William Longstaff to commemorate those soldiers with no marked graves on the Western Front during the First World War is also known as 'Ghosts of Menin Gate'. Longstaff attended a ceremony dedicating the Menin Gate memorial to the soldiers of the British Empire forces, just outside the town of Ypres, Belgium, on 24 July 1927. The memorial was dedicated to the 350,000 men of the British and Empire forces who had died in battles around Ypres, and bears the names of 55,000 men with no known grave, over 6,000 of whom were Australians. Longstaff was profoundly moved by what he

witnessed and that night, unable to sleep, returned to Menin Road and later claimed to have had a vision of spirits of the dead rising out of the soil around him. On returning to his studio in London he painted 'Menin Gate at Midnight' in a single session.

Today, 'Menin Gate at Midnight' has achieved the status of a national icon in Australia. The painting retains its ability to provoke an emotional response and to communicate the scale of the loss of life and the devastation of war. However, as people now have a very different understanding of war, the painting serves a slightly different function. Whereas in the past people responded to the painting as it related to the loss of

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a loved one and their own personal grief, now the painting communicates the loss experienced by a whole generation. The vast number of those who were killed, and the immensity of the damage wrought during the First World War, requires that those who sacrificed their lives should not be forgotten.

Longstaff used well-known motifs to trigger emotion. His scarlet poppies are flowers that could be found in the Flanders fields, but they also carry the traditional connotations of shed blood and remembrance; they represent a floral

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AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

ART09807

**The Friends of the
Canadian War Museum**

1 Vimy Place
Ottawa, ON K1A 0M8
Tel: 819.776-8618
Fax: 819.776-8623
www.friends-amis.org
E-mail: fcwm-amcg@magma.ca

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His Excellency the Right Honourable
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C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.
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Katharine Trim, LCol (Ret'd) Brad White.

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Editor/Layout: Ruth Kirkpatrick

Assitant Editor: Mike Braham

Photographers: Bob Fowler

Mailing Team: Pamela Brunt,
Tina Creber, Huguette Thériault

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*Ce Bulletin est aussi disponible
en Francais*



President's Message

I am writing this message on New Year's Day 2015, well aware that it will not reach you for some time. In a way, I am being true to my mother's guidance. You see, she believed that New Year's was a time, not to make resolutions about things to give up or things to be done, but rather, a time to actually do the things that are important in one's life. Work was important to her, so we always did some work on New Year's Day. Friends and family were important so we spent time with both, and so it went. So today, since the FCWM is important to me, I can think of no better time than

this New Year's Day to spend a few moments thinking about the organization, its members and where we've been and where we are going?

As part of where we have been, let me say a word about a great Friend, **General (Retired) Ramsey Withers, (1930-2014)**. General Withers joined the Friends at its inception and, in 1998, was named an Honorary Director. He was a mainstay of the Tuesday gathering of the War Museum's Volunteer Interpreter Program, and he could always be counted upon to support Friends and CWM activities. He remained an active volunteer, a vigorous Friends recruiter (he initially recruited me and I know he recruited many other new members) and a proponent of the Friends and the CWM right up to his death on 24 December 2014.

Born in York Township, Gen Withers graduated from the Royal Military College in 1952 and Queen's University in 1954. As a Signals Officer, he served in 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment during the Korean War and later with the Royal Canadian Dragoons in Canada and Germany. He served in command and staff positions at all levels before his appointment as Chief of the Defence Staff in 1980. After his retirement from the Canadian Armed Forces in 1983, he spent five years as Deputy Minister of Transport Canada followed by 10 years working in the private sector. Canada and the Friends have lost a respected soldier and a true gentleman.

As part of where we are and where we are going, we recently put the final signature on our Memorandum of Understanding with the CWM. Having the updated document duly signed ensures a clearer understanding of our long-time relationship with the Museum. On the practical side, I trust that by now you are aware that the Le Breton Gallery Catalogue has been published. Funded from our 2013-14 funding, we believe this CWM publication is worth the wait.

As part of where we are going, the Board and its various committees are deep in our strategic planning process and working to get the 2015-16 budget and project plan in place. The Medals Stories Project is moving slowly forward. We expect to see the results of the initial research and restorative work if not on the Museum website at the end of 2015 on the site by early 2016. Other Friends' projects will include: funding for the Gunter Award (to encourage young people to take on various military history projects), raising funds for the Adopt-a-Book Campaign and support for various restoration projects that are ongoing within the Museum "Tank Shop"

If you have not renewed your membership, I would encourage you to do so early in the year. As well as renewing your own membership, why not make the first quarter of 2015 your time to recruit new Friends.

blanket covering the bloodied bodies of unknown soldiers. At the same time, like the paper poppies worn on Remembrance Day, they are a tribute from the living to the dead. The portrayal of the steel-helmeted soldiers

rising from the cornfields extends the range of visual emblems used by Longstaff - the plentiful harvest; the harvest of men; the steel-helmeted crosses covering the graves of many

soldiers; and the helmeted bayonets raised in cheer and victory.

“Menin Gate at Midnight” is currently on loan to the Canadian War Museum and on display.

History in the Making: RCEME Museum Sod Turning

By Colonel (Ret'd) Andrew Nellestyn



On a bright sunny day in June 2014, the sky cobalt blue, RCEME and CELE flags fluttering in a gentle breeze, eighty plus RCEME personnel and guests gathered at CFB Kingston to witness history in the making as the sod was turned to start the construction of the RCEME Museum Phase I which will open to the public in the fall of 2015. The museum marks the return of the Corps of RCEME to its founding home at Camp Barriefield now known as CFB Kingston. The museum will be a notable and complimentary companion edifice to the nearby RCEME Memorial Gates.

Phase I, a shared expansion to the Military Communications and Electronics Museum (MC&E Museum), constitutes the first step in the creation of a military technology museum anchored by a stand-alone RCEME Museum (Phase II) and the MC&E Museum anticipated to open on the Corps' 75th Anniversary in 2019 or shortly thereafter.

Phase I will also include the construction of a pad in front of the existing MC&E Museum on which will placed equipment, yet to be selected, typically supported by the Corps.

The sod turning ceremony was preceded by a town hall meeting held by the Corps of RCEME's Director Colonel Sebastien Bouchard which was attended by

RCEME personnel stationed at CFB Kingston and surrounding units.

The ceremony also celebrated the expansion of the MC&E Museum with which the RCEME Museum Phase I will share space. The sod was turned jointly by BGen (Retd) Pep Fraser representing the MC&E Museum and Colonel (Retd) Andrew Nellestyn representing the RCEME Museum. Congratulatory speeches were made by both of these gentlemen as well as the Colonel Commandant BGen (Retd) Peter Holt, the Corps Director Colonel Sebastien Bouchard, the Corps SM CWO René Gilbert, Colonel Francois Chagnon CFB Kingston Base Commander and the MC&E Museum Director Maj (Retd) Mike DeNoble. Erl Kish and Larry Aubrey were present on behalf of RCEMEA and Tom Temple on behalf of EMEA. Tex Leugner sent a congratulatory message on behalf of RCEMEA Western Canada.

All attested to the historical significance of the occasion and the outstanding cooperation and team effort by the Corps of RCEME and the CELE Branch which made this project possible.

Maj (Retd) Don Chisholm, the Corps Padre, blessed the event and offered prayers for its success and in remembrance of all RCEME personnel who gave their lives in the preservation of peace.

The event was capped off by a well-attended and fine reception in the conference room of the MC&E Museum: a fitting gathering to mark the start of a most historic and promising beginning.

**Colonel Nellestyn is Co-Chair
RCEME Heritage Committee**

The Navy

It is upon the navy under the Providence of God that the safety, honour, and welfare of this realm do chiefly attend.

King Charles II

The Carro Veloce L.3/33 (CV 33) Series II Tankette

by Maj. (Ret'd) Don Allen



In the late 1920s Italy had a requirement for a small light tracked armoured reconnaissance vehicle and subsequently the Mark VI tankette was built in small numbers in Italy under license from British Vickers Carden-Loyd. The Canadian War Museum's smallest tracked armoured fighting vehicle is descended from the tiny Vickers Mark VI tankette or small tank. In 1933 Fiat and the Ansaldo Steel company developed a replacement for the Mark VI, the Carro Veloce or "fast tank" CV 3/33 tankette series retaining the Mark VI suspension. Series I was armed with a single machine gun (MG) and the Series II increased the firepower with a dual mounted 8 mm Fiat Model 14/35 MGs.

The CV 33 was designed for internal security and reconnaissance duties but because of a lack of other more suitably equipped vehicles it was often thrust into the role of a direct fire support vehicle usually with disastrous results. This was a small fully enclosed, dual hatched vehicle weighing 3.2 tons with a top speed of 42 kph. The crew consisted of a driver and a commander/gunner. The vehicle was cramped and the driver's back rest was the 45 litre gasoline tank which further restricted movement. The CV 33's 13 mm of armour could withstand small arms fire but would not have been proof against anything heavier. The vehicle was constructed around a heavy steel frame on which armour plates were bolted. This was a common international construction method up to the beginning of the Second War. The frame, however, adds extra weight where thicker armour could have been employed had it been simply welded together. Italian vehicles contin-

ued to be riveted/bolted throughout the war with welding used sparingly even when most nations had switched to fully welded construction methods.

The tankettes first saw combat in the mid-1930s in Italian East Africa and then in the Spanish Civil War in 1936 with the Italian armoured division supporting the Fascists. It was used extensively in the Second War most notably in the North African Campaign and in Italy until the Italian capitulation in late 1943. In September 1943 the Germans captured about 150 CV 33s and used them as tractors, security and airfield defence vehicles until the end of hostilities.

Despite its drawbacks it was a reasonably effective vehicle if used in the reconnaissance or security role. Of the approximately 2,800 built (all variants) over 1,200 were exported to nations that included China, Austria, Brazil and Afghanistan. The vehicle appeared in several variants including two flamethrower versions, a light bridge version - the Passerella, a radio command vehicle and several light mobile anti-tank gun versions.

The War Museum's CV 33 Series II is in reasonably good condition and displays the markings for the Ariete Armoured Division. The vehicle was obtained in North Africa by Britain and given to Canada after the war although the specific provenance is unknown. One quickly notices that there are neither seats nor ammunition racks and that is because the furniture and the shelving in most Italian vehicles was constructed of wood and have long since disappeared.

Don Allen is a retired Armoured Corps officer who spent 35 years in the Canadian Army. He is now a Volunteer interpreter in the LeBreton Gallery of the CWM.



FCWM Volunteer Interpreter Program (Part 1)

by **Gordon Foster**

The Friends of the Canadian War Museum have provided a variety of support and services to the Museum. The current Volunteer Interpreter Programme had its roots in activities at the former Museum site. Volunteers acted as guides at the War Museum's Sussex Drive location. Although almost all of our guides had military experience, a few did not. If our members were available, we would be asked to conduct tours. Otherwise, staff guides were assigned. We were booked for tours of the first and second floors of the building. Because of the popularity of the programme, we had to later include the third floor so that there would be room enough for the number of visitors participating. Museum office staff booked the tours. Additionally, some of us were asked to be present in the galleries once or twice a week to answer visitors' questions. This also provided a presence in the Museum for the Friends on a regular basis. During this period, because of the workload in the Museum office, a member of the volunteer guide staff took over the booking of tours led by volunteers.

In addition to activities at the Museum site, volunteers also acted as guides at Vimy House where the vehicle collection was stored. Usually, the building was closed to the public for all but a couple of days a year. The Friends came up with an initiative to open the collection to the public on Saturdays during the winter months. A Commissionaire was in attendance for security reasons and each Saturday several volunteers were present to inform visitors about the equipment and to talk about their own experiences. The whole project had an infor-

mal flavour. It also allowed visitors to see some of the vehicle restoration projects in progress. After the initial visits, Vimy House staff repositioned the vehicles to make them more accessible to viewers. This programme was so successful that the Museum decided to provide staff and open Vimy House to visitors during the summer months. One of our volunteers attended regularly on Sundays to act as a guide for visitors.

One of the volunteers provided an additional project. He gave a historical review of artillery in Canada

for the Field Instructor in Gunnery Course for the Royal Canadian Artillery School. Unfortunately, this occurred just after Vimy House was closed for the move to our new location. However, the project was carried out with reference to artillery pieces in the Museum building which closed at a later date.

This is the first of a three part article on the Volunteer Interpreter Program. Gordon Foster is the long-time FCWM Coordinator of the Program.

Adopt-a-Book 2014—Final Report

by **Bill Smith**

The 2014 Campaign was again a crowning success and achieved a total of all sixty-two titles being adopted this year. Friends, you have done it again, and once more you have earned a Bravo Zulu for your wonderful effort. Well Done Friends.

All sixty-two (62) were adopted by thirty-one (31) Friends. They are:

Pat Barnhouse	Charles Gruchy	Michael Parry
Michael Bowen	Robert Hamilton	Herbert Pitts
Pamela Brunt	Jarrott Holtzhauer	Jetty Poelstra
Larry Capstick	Donald Hook	Patrick Rafferty
Mai-yu Chan	Marilyn Joseph	William Reed
John Clarry	P.B. Kilby	William Smith
Walter Conrad	Michael Koch	Richard Thorman
René Danis	Doug Knight	Sylvain Trudel
Thomas Dent	Liliane Lafleur	Kenneth Tucker
John Grainger	Michael Lambert	Rollande Vézina.
	Terence Moore	

Bill Smith is the FCWM Coordinator of the Adopt-a-Book Program

The Founding of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry – August 1914

by Maj. (Ret'd) Larry Diebel



Hamilton Gault

On the third of August 1914, in the face of the near certainty of war with Germany, a successful, well-connected business man, Andrew Hamilton Gault met with the Canadian Minister of Militia, Sam Hughes. Hamilton Gault, a charismatic, imposing figure (he was six foot two) was an officer of the militia in Montreal. He had served with the Second Mounted

Rifles in the Canadian Contingent in the South African War and returned from South Africa an experienced officer deeply committed to both the Empire and the military.

At his meeting with the minister, Gault proposed that he be authorized to raise a Canadian regiment to go to the aid of Great Britain. To achieve operational readiness quickly, he planned to recruit former soldiers of either the Canadian or British Army, thereby reducing or eliminating the need for training. Further, he offered to personally meet the cost of raising the unit! Not surprisingly, the minister and government hard pressed for military resources were quick to accept Hamilton Gault's offer. The following day, the fourth of August, Great Britain declared war on Germany and Canada too was at war.

In an astonishingly short number of days, planning and arrangements for the new regiment were completed. Although Gault had wanted to raise a cavalry unit, he acceded to the government's insistence that infantry units were required. He insisted only that the regiment should be designated as "light Infantry", presumably, to distinguish it from the "poor bloody infantry" of the line. With the agreement of the Governor General, the Duke of Connaught, his very attractive and charming daughter, Princess Patricia, a granddaughter of Queen Victoria, accepted that the



Princess Patricia

regiment should be named after her as "The Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry." The Governor General's Military Secretary, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Farquhar, DSO, a personal friend of Hamilton Gault, who had assisted him in planning the regiment was designated to be commanding officer with Gault as second-in-command.

In accordance with his offer, Hamilton Gault was to meet the cost of "...the raising, clothing, equipping, pay, transportation, feeding and maintenance..." of the regiment to a maximum of \$100,000. All additional costs would be met by the Government of Canada. In the event, Gault's financial contribution to the founding of the regiment was \$99,000, slightly more than two million in 2014 dollars. (This was apparently the last occasion in the long history of the Empire when an individual totally met the cost of raising a regiment for Imperial service.)

With initial planning completed, on 11 August 1914, regimental recruiting posters went up in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton. The response was immediate -volunteers came forward from across the Dominion; they were "...prospectors, trappers, guides, farm-hands, cow-punchers, prize-fighters, professional and business men..." but, above all, old soldiers. In total more than 3,000 men volunteered. Patricia history paints legendary accounts of the robust enthusiasm of these men in their determination to reach Ottawa for enlistment. In the most famous incident an east bound train was "train napped" (reportedly at gun point) to proceed to Ottawa collecting would be recruits as it moved across the country. At Lansdowne Park in Ottawa 1100 of these men were accepted for service.

The recruits were medically inspected, documented, kitted out in uniforms (fitted by nine tailors paid for by Hamilton Gault), issued equipment, organized into a battalion of platoons and companies and given refresher training. As part of their recruitment every man was personally interviewed by his new commanding officer, Francis Farquhar.



On the 23rd of August the new battalion assembled for its first church parade and at its conclusion Princess Patricia presented "her" regiment a "Camp Colour", the pennant or flag used to mark the regiment's headquarters when deployed in the field. Of her own design and embroidery, this pennant became and remains a treasured regimental symbol known as the "Ric-A-Dam-Doo".

On the 28th of August, the regiment marched from its camp in Lansdowne to the Ottawa train station. There it

was inspected by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Militia. With the inspection over, the regiment entrained and departed for Montreal where it boarded the ocean liner *Megantic*, bound for the UK. It had been 17 days since the recruiting posters had gone up.

Larry Diebel is a Volunteer Interpreter with the FCWM. He served for 33 years in the Canadian Army, most of them with the PPCLI.

Enhancing Your Membership

by Mike Braham

The ability of the Friends of the Canadian War Museum to fulfil its mission of support to the Canadian War Museum rests entirely upon the contribution of the membership – their annual dues; donations; and volunteer activities such as Committee members, selling books through the used military book store, as volunteer interpreters in the Galleries, as researchers, and as vehicle restoration technicians.

All of us contribute through our annual membership dues and all are able to donate if we wish, but not all are able to participate in the various volunteer activities for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that not all of us live in the National Capital Region.

That said, I would like to suggest two ways in which all of us could contribute, regardless of our geographic location - ways that are not very onerous, but which would lend to improving the overall image of the Friends, not only internally, but also to other prospective members.

My first plea is for feedback. At present we receive virtually no indication from the Membership of its degree of satisfaction with the organisation and its various communications products. What do you think of the Torch; the Web Site; and, the Face Book site? Your constructive comments, both positive and negative would serve as an important basis for improvement.

Contextual input is my second request. We are always in need for new material for the Torch, the Web Site and our Face Book site. Do you have any militaria Personal Treasures that you can share with us for the Web Site? Have you "liked" the Face Book site? Are there any relevant personal or family stories that might interest other members if published in the Torch?

Your consideration of these two requests will be much appreciated.

FCWM: Changes in Communications

Mike Braham, who has chaired the Communications Committee and edited the Torch for the past three years, is stepping down from both posts. In his words, *"Both of these activities are now well established. It is now time to inject some professional communications and marketing expertise to better tap their potential for information dissemination and as recruiting tools."*

Taking over as Chair of the Communications Committee is Katharine Trim. Katharine is currently a member of the FCWM Board of Directors and has a considerable background of communications and marketing expertise in both the private and public sectors.

The new Editor of the Torch is Ruth Kirkpatrick who brings her long experience and proven expertise with graphic design and publication production to the task.

Mike will remain as a member of the Communications Committee and as an assistant Editor to assist these two ladies as they tackle their new challenges.

Changes to the Torch

by Ruth Kirkpatrick

You will note a number of layout changes with this edition of the Torch. It is my hope that they represent some presentational improvements. However, I would be pleased to receive any comments and/or suggestions that you might have with respect to those changes. If you have some input, please send it to fcwm-amcg@magma.ca attention: Torch Editor

The First World War by Hew Strachan

Reviewed by John Anderson

This is a totally fascinating book. In only 340 pages, the author manages to capture the entire world-wide extent of the First World War: Western Front (with which we are most familiar), Eastern Front, Italian Front, Middle East, Africa and the Far East; the land battles, the naval battles; and the politics.

The author, Hew Strachan (now Sir Hew Strachan), is Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford University; he is particularly well known for his work on the history of the First World War. It takes a very good academic to boil all of that detail down to only the salient points, and then a very good writer to convey only the essentials without making the book unreadable for ordinary mortals. The style is of necessity almost telegraphic, but it still reads very well.

Likewise of necessity, the book tends to be thematic rather than chronological. Each of its ten chapters discusses a particular aspect of the war. The chapters are arranged in roughly chronological order, but the content of each chapter overlaps with the content of other chapters because specific events can be looked at in different ways.

Readers looking for an overview of the war through Canadian eyes will be disappointed; Strachan's viewpoint is indeed global. And readers who want to focus on the battlefield drama will also be disappointed. Specific battles are mentioned, but only in the context of policy being executed or in terms of their influence on policy. Vimy Ridge, for example, which is quite rightly big in Canadian eyes, is mentioned but is not distinguished from other similar victories.

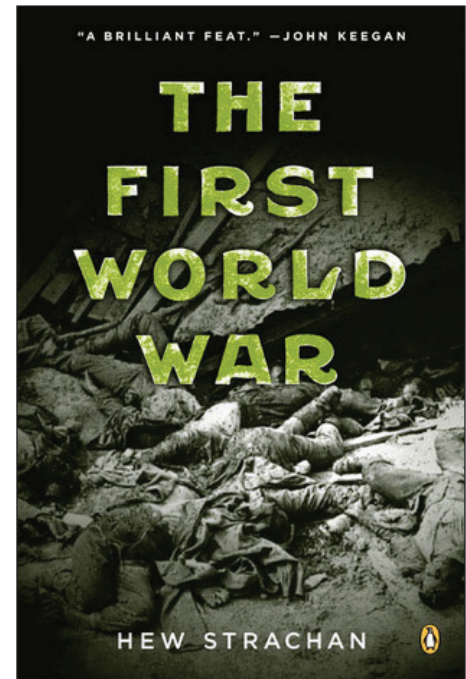
This book is valuable because it illustrates that the war was indeed

a global war. Canadians tend to focus on the Western Front because the events in this sector were the making of Canada as a nation. But battles on other fronts were perhaps even more apocalyptic.

But while focusing on the strategic aspects, developments on the battlefield are not completely neglected. For example, with respect to the western front, Strachan notes that, particularly in the early years, command and control difficulties contributed in large measure to the inability of either side to exploit tactical successes. And in the latter part of the war the effectiveness of artillery improved tremendously and was used in far greater concentrations in attempts to minimize casualties.

And behind all of the battlefield drama was the political drama. The book shows, for example, that the end of the war was precipitated by Germany's internal political collapse, in turn aided by, among other things, the allied naval blockade.

This book was written about ten years ago, but it came to my attention only this past summer when a ten-part television mini-series, prepared in parallel with the book, was re-broadcast on TV Ontario. The titles of the ten episodes in the TV series



are the same as those of the ten chapters in the book, and one can see parallels between the content of each chapter and its corresponding episode in the TV series, but the exigencies of the video medium require that the focus/emphasis be quite different. (Apologies to those readers who do not have access to TV Ontario!)

A remarkable book; highly recommended, especially for those readers who want a better idea of how all of the war's aspects fitted together.

John Anderson is a Volunteer Interpreter with the FCWM.



A New Book by Ed Storey

Warrant Officer Ed Storey is a long-time and active member of the Friends. Recently, his second book, 'Assault Vests' was published by Service Publications.

From the publisher's website, "The scarce Second World War Assault Vests are examined in full detail, including the original British design, the Canadian improvements, the Canadian 'Airborne' variant and more. Includes a look at post-war and modern US and Canadian equivalents." ISBN 978-1894581-99-8, \$29.95.

The picture is of the dust cover to the book.