

# The Torch

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### Canadians and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944 by Edward Poznanski

Among the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversaries to be commemorated this year will be the Warsaw Uprising. Between 1 August and 2 October 1944, the Polish resistance (AK) waged a heroic, uneven battle in the streets of Warsaw in an attempt to throw off the shackles of a brutal German occupation and liberate Poland's capital city to forestall a Soviet "liberation" and the imposition of a communist regime. What is all too often unnoticed, however, is that a small number of Canadians also took part in the Warsaw Uprising.

In the Warsaw Uprising, some 10,000 Polish insurgents were killed, with about 7,000 MIA and another 5,000 wounded. About 15,000 were taken prisoner. In addition, some 150,000-200,000 Polish civilians were killed. The remaining 700,000 civilians were forcibly deported from the city and sent to various camps in Germany or other destinations. What was left of the empty city was then systematically destroyed on the order of Adolf Hitler. The ruins of the city ended up in the hands of the advancing Soviet Red Army in January 1945 and a Soviet-controlled communist government was installed soon after.

In Ottawa's Confederation Park sits a very small and modest monument dedicated to 26 airmen of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) who are buried in Commonwealth War Graves in Poland. The monument was unveiled by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson on 12 December 1964. Of the 26 names inscribed on the monument, 7 were killed during the Warsaw Uprising.



During the Uprising the Western Allies tried to drop supplies from the air to the AK in and around Warsaw. The nighttime supply missions over enemy territory were highly dangerous and risky. The aircraft also had to fly very low over the drop zones in order to get the supplies as close as possible to the AK. Additionally, Joseph Stalin refused to allow the planes to land and re-fuel on Soviet-controlled territory around Warsaw. This meant that these supply missions had to make non-stop round trips from their bases in Italy to Warsaw and back.

No RCAF squadrons were committed to the missions, but the two RAF squadrons involved (148 Squadron and 178 Squadron) were composed of mixed Commonwealth flight crews, which included Canadians among them. The 7 Canadian airmen inscribed on the monument in Ottawa who died during the Warsaw Uprising were:

**Flying Officer Charles Beanland**, the lone RCAF member of an RAF 148 Squadron Halifax when it crashed on the night of 4-5 August 1944.

**Flying Officer Arnold Raymond Blynn, Flying Officer Harold Leonard Brown, Pilot Officer George Alfred Chapman, Flight Sergeant Arthur George William Liddell**, and **Flight Sergeant Charles Burton Wylie**, the 5 RCAF members on board an RAF 148 Squadron Halifax when it crashed on the night of 4-5 August 1944.

**Flying Officer George Dougald MacRae**, the pilot and lone RCAF member of an RAF 178 Squadron Liberator when it crashed in Warsaw's Paderewski Park on the night of 13-14 August 1944.

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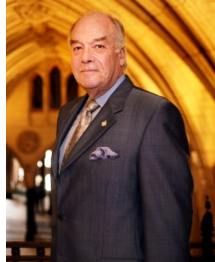
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## President's Message

**Douglas Rowland**



We're stepping into a new fiscal year 2014-15. In 2013-14, in addition to undertaking a major revision of the website and our computerized

administrative systems, the Friends have provided financial support to the Museum in several areas.

\$2000.00 went to the Military History Research Centre for the digitizing of some of its holdings. Our Adopt-a-Book program supplied the Library with 49 titles from 28 Friends valued at \$2500.00.

\$5000.00 contributed to paying for veteran parking at the Museum. \$5000.00 was allocated to prizes for "Canada and the Korean War" works submitted by students in the Gunter Awards competition.

\$25,000.00 was provided to publish a catalogue of the major military and naval artifacts on display in the LeBreton Gallery. Another \$5000.00 will assist the Museum to make its photo exhibit of the Korean Conflict available to smaller Museums throughout the country. The first instalment of \$5000.00 towards a multi-year commitment totalling over \$100,000.00 was given to support the Museum in digitizing its medal collection, beginning with World War I, making the collection accessible to any Canadian with access to the internet. You will be hearing much more about this project in the coming months.

For information on all of the above and more, plan to attend the Annual General Meeting, June 5. Set the date aside. Details to follow.

Concurrently with the War Museum's opening of the two outstanding exhibitions of WWI art "Transformations" and "Witness", the Bytown Museum in Ottawa launched its WWI commemorative exhibit entitled "Ottawa Answers the Call: The Capital and the Great War". To tell the story, the exhibit makes good use of the Bytown's sizeable collection of photographs from the period. The narrative is textured with periodic injections of the stories of individual Ottawans such as Lillian Freeman who is credited with prompting the adoption of the poppy as Canada's symbol of remembrance and who worked tirelessly on behalf of the returning wounded. At the entrance to the exhibit is a flat screen flashing a listing of names of each of the 67,722 Canadians killed in action during the First World War. Each name shows for a mere three seconds with the entire presentation lasting over 56 hours. The Ottawa Valley Button Club (an entity hitherto unknown to me) has provided an excellent presentation of uniform buttons of the Canadian Expeditionary Force including a large quantity with battalion numbers as the dominant feature. The exhibit is professionally presented and well worth a visit if you're in the nation's capital. You can learn more at [www.bytownmuseum.com](http://www.bytownmuseum.com).



**Tom Caldwell, President of the Board of the Bytown Museum and Friends member, Helen McKiernan at the entrance to the exhibit."**

## Canadians and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944 (continued)



Every August 1<sup>st</sup> the Polish Combatants' Association of Canada hosts a small ceremony at the RCAF monument in Confederation Park. The ceremony salutes the heroism of the AK during the Warsaw Uprising and ensures that the bravery of the 26 RCAF airmen buried in Poland is not forgotten. On 26 September 1995, the monument was rededicated and was adorned with the Polish Home Army Cross. At the same time, in recognition of the heroism of the 26 RCAF airmen buried in Poland, the Polish government awarded this decoration to all of them posthumously.

I visited Poland for the first time in 1996. I made the trip with my father who had been among the insurgents during the Warsaw Uprising and was about 300 metres from the crash of one of the Allied planes. We made a point to pay special homage to the Canadians who lost their lives during the Warsaw Uprising. We visited the Commonwealth War Graves

section of the Rakowicki Cemetery in Krakow and found the graves of the 7 RCAF airmen whose names are inscribed on the monument in Ottawa and were killed during the Warsaw Uprising.



In Warsaw, we found the crash site of FO MacRae's Liberator, which is marked with a commemorative boulder.

Since 1995 I have been researching the identification other RCAF airmen in the mixed Commonwealth flight crews who participated in the supply missions to the AK in Poland, but who have not yet been recognized. They are all deserving of recognition for one of the least-known exploits of Canadians in World War II.

Edward Poznanski is a member of the Friends

## FCWM Used Military Book Sales by Robert Hamilton

The Used Military Book Room is a fascinating resource maintained by the Friends of the Canadian War Museum (FCWM).

Located adjacent to the FCWM administrative office in the Canadian War Museum (CWM) it offers a diverse range of titles covering all military subjects from general military history to technical manuals. A feature of the Book Room is its collection of Canadian military history spanning the full spectrum of Canada's involvement in armed conflict.

The Book Room draws its holdings entirely from donations, often from individuals and estates. When books are received, they are examined for condition, categorized by subject matter and priced and shelved. Pricing is done systematically with reference to commercial sources for used books but the practice is that the books are priced to sell; customers invariably leave with an armload of books and a smile! All sales revenues accrue to the FCWM and as the Book Room operates with zero overhead, the benefit

can be significant.

The Book Room is staffed by a group of enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers many of whom are retired military. While they come with diverse skills and experience, all share a passion for military history. They consider the Book Room a particular treasure and they encourage you to visit and share their passion.



Bob Hamilton is an FCWM Volunteer in the Bookstore

## The Shorncliffe Stained Glass Windows

There is a collection of eight stained glass windows at the National Railway Museum (NRM) in York, England. These were originally installed in two refreshment rooms of the Shorncliffe Camp railway station on the outskirts of Folkestone, which was used by Canadian soldiers who trained at nearby Shorncliffe Camp from 1915 onward. The station was re-named Folkestone West in 1962.

The caption for one of the windows states:

*2002-7437 Window glass, stained, displaying the arms of Reading and a maple leaf, surrounded by hops, from Refreshment Room, Folkestone West [Shorncliffe]. War memorial presented to the South Eastern & Chatham Railway in 1919 by the Royal Canadian Army in appreciation of the services rendered at the Station during World War 1.*



An investigation has revealed three recent references to the donation of the windows by the Canadians: the book *“Dover & Folkestone During the Great War”*, a Western Front Association’s “Bulletin” article, and the Canadian Great War Project website. The book and article were written by the same person, who is referenced in the website.

However, the Library and Archives Canada First World War diaries for 1919 were examined at the corps, divisional, and brigade level for any mention of the windows and none was found.

Furthermore, the book *“Folkestone During the War 1914-1919”* by J.C. Carlile discloses the Canadians donating a pulpit and furniture to a Hythe church, near Shorncliffe Camp, but no reference to the windows.

Enquires were sent to the NRM and the Folkestone Library. Replies reveal what actually transpired.

An 1881 refurbishment of the station included new windows embellished with stained glass.

A Folkestone Library file contains correspondence from 1969 about enquiries to the Public Archives of Canada, the Director of History at the Canadian Forces, and the British Transport Historical Records, regarding the windows donation. No evidence was discovered to confirm it.

This story was based on two roundels embedded in one of the windows. One depicted “R.E.” (incorrectly assumed to stand for “Canadian Royal Engineers”), and one a “maple leaf”. In fact, the R.E. stands for “Rex Edwardus” and, most likely, the leaf is a hop leaf.



A



report from the Folkestone Town Clerk dated August 14, 1969 explained that the donation story, referred to as “quoted hearsay”, was originally reported in the Folkestone Gazette in 1955 and repeated in the British Railways Southern Region Magazine in 1960, and in the Folkestone Herald.

The Folkestone Herald interviewed retired railway workers who had been at the station from 1900. None remembered the windows being installed.

This donation would have been an additional credit to the reputation of the CEF; pity it’s just an urban legend.

## Canada's D-Day Tribute Campaign from The Juno Beach Centre Association

*The following is an extract of a letter sent to the Torch seeking our assistance in advertising this campaign.*



**On June 6, 1944, D-Day, 359 Canadians were killed in action on the beaches of Normandy.** I'm writing to inform you of a commemorative campaign currently underway by the Juno Beach Centre in honour of the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings -- **Canada's D-Day Tribute.**

In May of 2014, the JBC will commemorate the sacrifice of Canada's fallen by installing 359 Tribute Markers – one for every soldier killed on D-Day – on Juno Beach.

The Canadians who fell on D-Day and the thousands more who were killed throughout the Battle of Normandy were from communities across Cana-

da. They went to the school down your street, sat in your church every Sunday, and worked at your businesses. Some of the men were only boys as young as 18; they stormed the beach fresh out of high school and minor sports. The D-Day Tributes will tell the stories of these soldiers, and can be sponsored for a minimum of \$500. We want to tell the unique story of each of the 359 Canadians who made the ultimate sacrifice.

This campaign aims to raise awareness of the role Canada played in the D-Day Landings and to honour those who lost their lives. The funds raised will ensure the placement of the tributes in time for the 70th as well as help to pave the way for future commemoration and educational programming at the Centre.

Our goal is to reach as many Canadians as possible with this campaign, and we hope that the Friends of the Canadian War Museum will help us in this task ...

For more details, visit [www.junobeach.org/tribute](http://www.junobeach.org/tribute) or contact **Jen Sguigna** at [jsguigna@junobeach.org](mailto:jsguigna@junobeach.org) or by phone toll-free at **1-877-828-JUNO (5866)**.

## The New FCWM Web Site & Face Book Site by Mike Braham

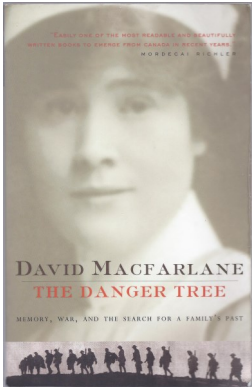
The new FCWM web site is now on line at <https://www.friends-amis.org/index.php/en/> and it is a major improvement over its predecessor. More modern in design, it is easier to navigate, presents the material much better, and has much greater scope for expansion and innovation. You are encouraged to visit the site and to give us your comments and suggestions for improvement or additions.

You are also encouraged to visit and "like" our Face Book site which contains a continually growing inventory of interesting and timely material, particularly as it pertains to the many important anniversaries that

are occurring within the next few years.

The Web Site and the Face Book sites complement each other and are designed to provide you, and others, with a panorama of the issues and events of interest to the Friends of the Canadian War Museum. They are therefore, your sites and require your constructive input to remain relevant. Comments should be directed by mail and/or by e-mail to the FCWM office at [fcwm-amcg@magma.ca](mailto:fcwm-amcg@magma.ca) Attention: Mike Braham.

## Book Review—The Danger Tree: Memory, War, and the Search for a Family's Past. By David Macfarlane, 1991. Reviewed by John Anderson



This is another fascinating book, published some years ago, that I picked up in the Used Military Book Room maintained by the Friends of the Canadian War Museum (FCWM). The title refers to the so-called "Danger Tree" in no mans land around which the shattered remnant of the Newfoundland Regiment gathered after being slaughtered on 01 July 1916 on the first day of the

Somme Offensive in World War I.

But the book is much more than a war story. More accurately, it is the story of the family of Josiah and Louisa Goodyear of central Newfoundland, particularly their six sons and one daughter. (Josiah and Louisa were the author's great grandparents.) It is also a history of modern Newfoundland, particularly Lord Northcliffe and the advent of the Anglo Newfoundland Development Corporation in 1909, and extending through confederation with Canada in 1949 to the modern day. But it is also a fascinating and insightful history of how the First World War was reported in Newfoundland and how it shaped Newfoundland and affected the Goodyear family. (Of the six sons, three were killed and two were wounded,

one of the latter after being one of the 68 who survived the debacle of 01 July 1916.)

The book is not just a third-person memoir. It is also the personal story of how the author encountered these memories as embodied in and recounted by his relatives on his mother's side. One of the strengths of this book is the author's ability to weave back and forth between personal memories, family history and Newfoundland history without ever feeling disjointed. Indeed, the three threads, or viewpoints, make a compelling cohesive narrative.

As far as I can tell, the book is entirely factual. Some of the more detailed descriptions read like fiction -- until one looks at the acknowledgements and realizes that they are based on first-hand accounts.

It might be easy to dismiss this book as being of primary interest only to Newfoundlanders. But as the book progresses it is clear that the author is also tracing the history of the stories and the memories, and notes with regret that, with the passage of time and "modernization", the stories are being lost. And in that sense this is a book that should be of interest to all of us.

I commend this book to you, and this time I do say "Enjoy!" -- and reflect.

### The FCWM Needs Your Help

Membership in the FCWM has been steadily declining in recent years and we need your help to reverse that trend. If each of you recruited a single friend, colleague or family member to join our worthy cause, this troubling decline would be

stemmed and reversed in a single blow. Your help will be most appreciated. Thank you.



## The Cosgrave Error – Another Perspective by Ramsey Withers, General (Ret'd)

The Colonel Lawrence Cosgrave story in the February *Torch* clicked my memory bank. There may have been another reason why he signed on the wrong line on 2 September 1945.

In the summer of 1985 my wife and I were having lunch with friends, Barry and Martha Steers, at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo. Barry was our ambassador there from 1981 to 1989. When discussing the storied history of the property, renowned as one of the most handsome in the capital and located in the same district as the Imperial Palace, he told me the following about the Cosgrave incident.

*(The late Barry Steers grew to prominence as a trade commissioner, knew Cosgrave personally and I heard this directly from him.)*

The day before the surrender signing ceremony General MacArthur conducted a dress rehearsal. Afterwards all the delegates were having coffee in USS *Missouri's* wardroom. As is well known, United States Ships have been "dry" ever since the sinking of the USS *Maine*, in 1898, in Havana harbour. The General opined that it was unfortunate that they could not toast the victory with champagne. Cosgrave spoke up saying that they could have champagne if they put him ashore and gave him a vehicle - arrangements were made accordingly.

Lawrence Cosgrave spent many years as a Canadi-

an Trade Commissioner in the Far East after the First World War. In fact, he was doing just that in Australia when the Second World War started. In the course of his duties during those years he was often in Tokyo and, naturally, stayed at the Canadian Embassy. He knew where there could well be champagne.

After Pearl Harbour the Canadian Embassy staff was evacuated from Japan in accordance with international convention and the grounds were put in charge of the Swiss Ambassador. The Swiss gave responsibility to a Japanese civilian employee of the Canadian Embassy; he was the gardener and became the caretaker. During the war Japanese authorities took constant care of the property, including replacement of glass windows after bombings.

When he arrived at the gate, the Japanese caretaker, who knew Cosgrave well, was ecstatic. He reckoned that Cosgrave was here to take charge! Although he was disappointed to find out that he would have to wait until the Canadian staff's return, he was pleased to be able to show how well he had discharged his duties, including the wine cellar that had remained untouched for three years.

The excellent vintage champagne was loaded on the truck and embarked in *Missouri*. The victory was toasted accordingly.

## In-Memoriam Donations by The Editor

You will have probably noticed that the list of "In-Memorial Donations" are not recorded in this issue of the *Torch*. The enormous number of generous regular donations and in-memoriam donations simply did not leave enough space to publish them all in the *Torch*. I was therefore left with a dilemma that I rationalised as follows - all of those who submit an in-memoriam donation receive a letter of thanks from the FCWM Executive. The same is not true of all of those making regular donations. I therefore decided to give priority in this case to listing those that made regular donations.

That said, we have created a new page on the

FCWM web site for donations and, starting for the period 1 Jan. 2014 - 31Mar. 2014, all donations, both regular and in-memoriam will be recognized on that page.

I know that is small comfort for those few that do not have access to the internet and to you I can only offer my apologies and heartfelt thanks for your generosity.

I hope that we can return to normal with the next edition of the *Torch*, although that would be somewhat self-defeating since it would imply fewer donations.

**Donations: The FCWM thank all of the following who generously donated to the Friends between 1 Jan. 2014 - 31 Mar. 2014**

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