

971 RCAF Air MARSHAL SLEMON WING

Air Force Association Newsletter July 2007



Heathrow Airport, London, in July - 2407 years ago.

Social Calendar

- May 20 Thanks to Joe Spencer 22 of us enjoyed a tasty brunch at the Country Buffet at special rates.
- 28 Memorial Day. Art Nielsen and Jim Stewart laid the 971 Wing wreath. 13 Wing members attended. Your scribe missed this one but he did, while in Toronto 30 May, attend the monthly luncheon of POW veterans - 8 veterans and 2 wives, ageing but still vibrant remnants of a once-large group.
- Jun 30 1730 at Pat and Buzz Wilder, 16 Lake Avenue, 80909. 633-9121
- Jul 01 Dominion Day. The name, taken from the Biblical "He shall have dominion from sea to sea" was chosen by George Munro Grant (Queen's University principal) in the 1870s. Today, in the Commonwealth, only England, Scotland, and Canada have their own Royal Coat of Arms.
- Jul 21 Nancy and Peter Rallis, 4355 Winding Circle, 80917, 597-7825
- Aug 01 Retirement dinner for Wing members Eric and Carla Findley, 1830 at the Consolidated Club, Peterson AFB. The Findleys arrived here six years ago, immediately joined our Wing, and have been strong supporters ever since. Rick spent his first two years as NORAD Director of Operations and the last four as Deputy Commander NORAD. They have hosted the Wing on a couple of occasions and now invite us all to their retirement dinner and to the changeover ceremonies. Both have been appreciated and very well liked. We will miss them. Nova Scotia will benefit.
- Aug 02 Change of Command from LGen Eric Findley to LGen J.J.C. Bouchard, 1030 at the Club, Peterson AFB.
- Aug 18 1500 (3 PM) at Charlene and Bill Champion, 12612 Pommel Circle, Elbert, 495-0529. Well worth the drive even at today's gas prices! East on Woodmen, 10 miles east of Academy Blvd, north on Meridian Road for 5 miles, east on Latigo Blvd to Hallelulah Trail. Left on Pommel Circle to 12612.

TOM & KATE KUPECZ: The longest-serving airman, LCol Tom will retire 03 July at age 60 after 42 years of service. They will continue to live in Trenton. With a private pilot's license, Tom will continue to get airborne.

The Editor's Corner

Slavery: Spending \$40 million in atonement ceremonies, the UK is commemorating the 200th anniversary of the abolishment of slavery throughout the British Empire, and orders to the Royal Navy to intercept slave ships and free the captives. In fact the Royal Navy was still on the job as late as the 1930s in the Red Sea. The 2007 film, *Amazing Grace*, recalls William Wilberforce's 20-year struggle in the UK House of Commons to abolish slavery. He also founded 69 philanthropic societies. The UK has issued a set of 6 stamps commemorating leaders of the anti-slavery movement.

Slavery has been a human failing as long as there have been humans. Today, we still have over 27 million slaves in the sex trade, in child labour, as child soldiers, in sweat shops, and the like. Slave labour camps still exist in North Korea, China, and several other countries.

Officially, slavery was ended in Canada in 1793 by Gov. John Graves Simcoe, the UK in 1807, in the colonies in 1833, in the USA in 1865, in Brazil in 1888, in Ethiopia in 1931, in Germany and Japan in 1945, in Saudi Arabia in 1962, and in the USSR in 1991

West African countries attract tourists to sites that recall the 12 million Africans who were transported to the Americas (3 million of them in British ships). Europeans and Americans are assigned the blame, and expected to cough up compensation. Little is said about the fact that the majority of these slaves were purchased from Africans who captured other Africans or the fact that thousands of Arab caravans transported African slaves throughout the Arab world or that this trade, although much reduced, still exists. Europe's recent anti-trafficking laws have increased the number of human traffickers in jail from 500 in 2000 to 4,700 in 2005.

The Christian Church placed sporadic curbs on slavery from 1435 but slavery was mainly accepted as the church had 1500 square miles of land cultivated by slaves. Pope Gregory XVI condemned slavery in 1839. The Qur'an endorsed slavery and Muhammad owned slaves. Nation-wide emancipation in Muslim countries did not occur until after WWII. The Hindu caste system is akin to slavery.

So, why has the last 200 years seen such a change in human behaviour? Yes, we can credit the British with leading the revulsion towards the institution, but there were also many other factors. The Industrial Revolution, led by the UK, reduced the need for human labour. Slave owners were also scared by revolts such as Samuel Sharpe in Jamaica and Toussaint L'Overture in Haiti with the resultant massacre of Whites. The revolution is still in its early stages. Today, we all own slaves, but we call them by different names: dogs, horses, goats, electrons, hydrocarbons, solar panels, wind turbines, and so on. Unlike cougars, humans need others to do their work.

Values are what distinguish tribes, nations, political parties, religions, and so on. Groups with similar values distinguish themselves with symbols, flags, dress, and the like. We, in the Western World, cherish our values which include a tolerance of other cultures and, what we like to brag about, a liberal approach to immigration. Migrations have been endemic in our human history with resultant blending, and exterminations, of cultures. Our proud Anglo-Saxon heritage contains large measures of Hebrew, Greek, Roman, Hindu, German, Scandinavian, and French components. Today, current migrations are causing us worry that our tolerance is eroding our values and replacing them with the values of the newcomers. In the United States we see Spanish reclaiming much of the land taken from Mexico. In Canada the Union Jack, under which millions of Canadians proudly served, has faded. The proud RCMP stetson is giving way to turbans; students may now wear kirpans (ceremonial daggers) to school; pressure has been exerted to implant Sharia law in Muslim communities; and Pakistanis have made strong inroads into transportation and immigration services. We gave in to Hasidic Jews and replaced female drivers-license testers when these Jews refused to be tested by women. Europe is having major problems in integrating Muslim immigrants. When is enough, enough?

Sensitivities are high. The small town of Hérouxville in Quebec raised a storm in Australia, Russia, and Turkey when it produced a pamphlet outlining its values to prospective immigrants who felt insulted. In trying to be helpful they have been called fascist and racist. If we must accept UCOs (Unidentified Covered Objects) with their hijabs, veils, and burkas should we not also extend the same tolerances to nudists? If Allah created the female form, is it not an insult to him to cover it from head to toe? The plant kingdom that flaunts its sexual parts to titillate birds and bees looks askance at humans whose practices would have them cover all flowers. Nudism should present no problem to the military. Instead of pinning on medals and rank they could use the Ancient Briton formula of Woad to paint them on. We may, however, have to develop bullet and weather proof woad.

As the old song states: "Woad's the stuff to show men/Woad to scare your foeman/Boil it to a brilliant hue/And rub it on your back and your abdomen./Romans came across the channel,/All dressed up in tin and flannel./Half a pint of woad per man/Will dress us more than these."

Heritage is something to cling to, and protect, as long as we are selective. All heritages have shameful episodes mixed in with the proud. This scribe still cherishes the best aspects of what the Union Jack and the Fleur-de-lis imply. See page 5 for "The Red Ensign, Vimy, and All That".

A MOHAWK TO REMEMBER: One hundred years ago, in March 1907, Dr. O was laid to rest in Deseronto, Ontario, in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory.

10,000 mourners had paid their respects as he lay in state at Massey Hall and, today, a life-sized statue of him still adorns the Toronto executive suites of the Independent Order of Foresters, a \$6-billion insurance company with worldwide clients that owes its success to:

Oronhyatekha, born in 1841 on a reservation near Brantford, Ontario, and selected by Anglican missionaries to be trained as a shoemaker, had greater ambitions. With the help of a phrenologist he wrangled education in Massachusetts and Ohio by Wesleyans who assumed he would make a good missionary among the natives. In 1860 the Six Nations Council chose him to address the Prince of Wales during his Canadian visit. With the prince was a professor of medicine at Oxford who casually mentioned this young Mohawk would make a good medical student. Oronhyatekha took this as an open invitation so wrangled his way into Oxford for two semesters which prompted the University of Toronto to train him as an Ontario doctor. He became founding secretary of the Hastings County Medical Association, then won 9 medals for Canada at the Wimbelton Cup Shooting Match in 1871. He joined the Masons, the Good Templars, the Orange Order, and the IOF. The IOF was a US company whose secretary absconded with its funds, leaving the company floundering.

Oronhyatekha seized control of the Canadian chapter to make it a phenomenal success. He encouraged the membership of women and spread the company to Europe and Asia. His sound foundations saw membership continue to rise after his death, increasing to 1.7 million by 1917.

He built the 5-storey "castle" on Foresters' Island, Bay of Quinte, for orphans. He was President of the Grand Council of Canadian Chiefs, remaining a proud Mohawk throughout life.

RICKSHAWS: Calcutta has outlawed the rickshaw trade, arguing it is shameful for one human being to pull another. Is this not a problem of attitude rather than subservience? We can have as much respect for a rickshaw puller, who is earning a living the best way he can, as we do to the tax preparer who does our tax return, the politician who makes our laws, or the cook who prepares our meals.

LANDMINE STATISTICS: As of Nov 2006 there were 100 million landmines, that include over 300 types, buried in 78 countries. In Afghanistan and Cambodia 35% of the land is unusable because of landmines.

It costs \$3 to produce one landmine and \$300 to remove it.

Before the 1997 Ottawa Mine-Ban Treaty, signed by 154 countries, there were 260 million mines stockpiled in 131 states. By 2005 this had dropped to 178 million in 50 states.

China still has 110 million, Russia 26 million, the US 10 million, Pakistan 6 million, India 5 million, and South Korea 408,000.

Some 10 million are manufactured each year by Belgium, China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, S. Africa, Russia, and the USA.

Of the \$376 million contributed in 2005 to mine clearance, the US gave \$82 million and Canada \$21 million.

In 2005, landmine casualties were estimated between 15 and 20 thousand including 115 de-mining workers. In Mozambique alone some 30,000 victims who have lost limbs have no prosthesis help. Deminers get a 2-month course. Top salary is \$300 per month. They get every other weekend off and two weeks leave after each 2-month period. They work with trained rats and dogs who find the mines. (Contributed by Keith Greenaway).

A RELIGION FOR ALL MEN: When I taught world history at Mitchell High School, I included a week on religions from Animism to Zoroastrian. We had many good discussions as students came from Christian, Mormon, Creationist, Agnostic, and Jewish backgrounds. At the end of the week I assigned each student the task of designing a new religion for today's world because the youngest we had, Islam, was 600 years old.

I got some very good papers, but the one that surprised me was from a girl who built her religion around women finding fulfillment by devoting their lives to pleasing men and easing their passage through life. She explained how God had designed the female body to excite and please men.

With the modular system at Mitchell at the time, I had lots of time to hold one-on-one discussions at my desk with students. I called her in, not to rush to join her tempting religion, but to discover where she was coming from as it was akin to the suicide bomber getting a free pass into paradise by killing others as he blew himself up. She was very sincere and did not consider she would be making a slave of herself. I learned that her father was a preacher who had imbued his, and other families, with this divine, and happy, occupation for women. What say you, girls? Is this so or just another example of brainwashing?

VIVA is an internet service run by Radio-Canada International and broadcast in Arabic, English, French, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian to explain all aspects of life throughout Canada to prospective immigrants. It is Montreal-based with 80 employees on a \$15 million budget. Its audience is in the tens of millions, and internet questions have covered a wide range of topics. (Keith Greenaway).

EARLY BIRDS: It is not too early to submit items now for the September newsletter. Send to gsweanor@pcisys.net.

THE WORMS AND HUMANS that dominate North America today are not natives. The humans are imports from Europe, Africa, and Asia, the worms from Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. The Australian flatworm injects enzymes into its prey before eating it alive. Plants are suffering in areas that were covered by ice. Beetles, centipedes, and salamanders were more efficient at aerating the soil after the ice left than the imported worms now in control.

CHURCHILL KEEPS RETURNING: This time it is the Russians who offer to keep the shipping lanes ice free all year, rather than the current 4 months, to encourage current commercial planning to make Churchill a major container port as part NASCO (North America's Super Corridor Coalition). Mexico, the central US, and Manitoba are all quite keen on this, but Vancouver, Thunder Bay, and Halifax prefer to leave things the way there are, so raise the spectre of the route also being used to siphon off water from Canada's shallow lakes to the thirsty US. Besides, BC has plans to make Prince Rupert a second major Pacific port while Kansas City and Winnipeg plan to be warehouse centres.

CANADIAN PROCUREMENT:

Coast Guard: 6 new ships will be built in Canada, 4 for midshore patrols and 2 science ships for offshore work. Cost \$324 million.

Search & Rescue: A high-speed air-cushion vehicle will be purchased for work in Quebec waters. However, the planned purchase of 15 fixed-wing aircraft for search & rescue to replace the 40-year-old Buffalos has been shelved as Afghanistan is eating up available funds.

Army: 20 Leopard 2A6 tanks are being leased from Germany to replace this summer 20 Leopard 1's. An additional 100 Leopard 2's will be purchased from the Netherlands. These are new, unused tanks that have been in storage for 10 years. Cost \$650 million.

Navy: The delivery of new maritime helicopters has been delayed a few months because of a strike at Sikorsky.

Air Force: The 1st C-17 should arrive in August.

SHANK'S PONY vs GUMBO JETS: Transportation, that has changed so dramatically must undergo yet another sea change. It was not so long ago that Irish immigrants, fleeing the potato famines of the 1840s and surviving the typhus aboard wind-driven ships designed for the lumber, not human, trade would, on clearing health checks at Quebec, walk to their destinations, such as Toronto and Boston. They contributed very little to Global Warming. Today, transportation is the worst polluter. No suitable answers, other than reductions, are on the horizon. US airfreight, for instance, has increased 375% in 25 years and the UK plans to double airport capacity to handle 500 million passengers annually.

Comparing automobiles and airliners, carbon dioxide emissions per passenger mile are similar

The QEII produces 9 tons of emissions per passenger on a return trans-Atlantic crossing. This is 8 times as much carbon as travelling by plane.

New fuels are, so far, not the answer. Biofuels cause more climate change than they prevent. Forests in South America and SE Asia are being cleared to produce palm oil so every ton of palm oil produced gives 33 tons of CO2 emissions which is ten times as much as petroleum. Hydrogen? Being less dense it requires wider planes that would have to remain in the stratosphere, producing a climate-changing effect 13 times greater than current subsonic planes.

Trains have much lower carbon emissions than planes (11 kgms of CO2 per person compared to 122 for aircraft) until we increase train speeds from 140 to 230 mph and exceed aircraft emissions.

The A380 and B787 use 3 litres to move a passenger 100 kms compared to 3.5 for other jets.

Zeppelins, blimps, or airships average 85% less emissions than jet planes if you can be satisfied with the blistering speed of 80 mph. But, this may be our future. Among others, the Queen is environmentally conscious. To compensate for the pollution she caused by flying to the Jamestown 400-year celebrations, she paid a firm to eliminate an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

ICAO's 190 member states will meet in September in Montreal to decide on air travel changes. Each minute that can be saved in flight time saves 62 litres of fuel. Sir Richard Branson of Virgin Airlines proposes towing all aircraft on the ground.

And, while we are at it, we will have to eliminate cattle - or fit them with de-methane contrivances as they emit more pollutants than coal-fired plants.

Will our grandchildren appreciate all these challenges we are leaving them?

PR and CAMOUFLAGING THE DEVIL: As one who continues to be suspicious of public-relations pundits and commercials, I find it unbelievable that hiring PR firms to gain concessions and invites to the White House really work, yet Saudi Arabia, Equatorial Guinea, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uganda, Libya, and Qatar have all hired US PR firms to stress shared values and to paint them as good guys. The crowning PR achievement was for Teodoro Obiang, cruel and absolute dictator of Equatorial Guinea, who has a direct line to God, to be hosted in Washington and praised as "a good friend of the US." It took 3 PR firms to get Azerbaijan's Ilham Aliyev an audience and the remark that "Aliyev knows that democracy is the wave of the future." He still has thousands of protestors beaten into unconsciousness. One small satisfaction is that our PR firms did not have the stomach to accept Sudan's bid to hire them. But, is it our PR or their oil that lays out the welcome mat?

THE RED ENSIGN, VIMY, and ALL THAT: John Heyes of Ottawa, who has been a leader in the fight, has sent us literature showing that the Red Ensign, that was Canada's flag until replaced by the maple leaf one in 1964, will now fly permanently at the memorial of Vimy Ridge in France where, in April 1917, the Canadian Army produced a major turning point in the war. This victory cost 3,598 Canadian lives plus many more wounded.

Flags may be just bits of coloured cloth, but they represent people and times and symbolize all the emotions engendered by companionship, hardship, sacrifice, achievements, and shared values. This scribe has complained to staffs at numerous historic sites, that fly today's flags, that they are historically incorrect and insensitive to the ancestors they are trying to represent.

I recall what a sad day it was when we Canadians at Ent AFB were ordered to assemble to lower the Red Ensign and replace it with the maple leaf flag. I felt we were simply laying the groundwork for future changes. While truly emblematic of southern Canada, the maple leaf does not grow in most of the country. A snowflake crowning a dandelion would be more suitable. It was even sadder when the "Royal" was dropped from the RCAF and our ranks were discarded for Army ranks, thus weakening our ties with all the other Commonwealth Royal Air Forces. We veterans felt we no longer mattered and were being discarded. Sure, the Union Jack was originally emblematic only of England, Scotland, and Ireland, but it had become the symbol of the British Commonwealth and Empire and, in WWII, embraced all those thousands who fled occupied Europe. It gave a great sense of brotherhood. All this was lost to satisfy politicians who had never seen action or who were never numbed by the steady loss of friends.

Using the maple leaf is like saying "England" when we mean "The United Kingdom" or "America" when we mean only the "United States".

The major part of the Stars and Stripes commemorates the 13 of the UK's 29 American colonies that broke away. Stars have been added to represent individual states but who can tell which star is theirs? Like the Union Jack, the Stars and Stripes has embraced millions who have come seeking a better life. It is no longer the rebellious Anglo-Saxon bunting it started out to be. Should it, too, be replaced by some modern symbol, such as a melting pot? Actually, the current US flag ignores both the original inhabitants and all that colonial history.

It takes hundreds, if not thousands, of years to build a heritage out of shared sacrifices. Starting afresh in a modern world leaves us naked. Roots make us what we are and should be cherished.

A COMMON CURRENCY IN EUROPE MUST LEAD TO A COMMON LANGUAGE: Those agreeable Germans admit it should be English, but suggest a few changes over a 5-year period to correct some of the shortcomings.

In the first year "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly the Sivil Service will agree. The hard "c" will give way to "k" to clear up konfursion and keyboards can have one less letter.

In the sekond year "ph" will be replaced by "f", making words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the third year publik akseptance kan be expekted to embrase more komplikated changes, like the removal of double letters which have ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent "e" in the languag is disgrasful.

By yer 4, we wil be reseptiv to replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v".

During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary "o" kan be drouped from vords kontaining "ou", so in ziz fifz yer ve vil hav a reil sesibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united Urop vil finali kum tru.

Und ve vil al be speking German like zey vunted in ze first plas.

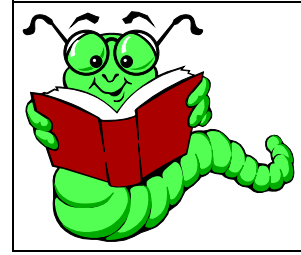
OLNY SRMAT POELPE CAN RAED TIHS: I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclyt y uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid, aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oreodr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh? Yaeh and I awlyas tghuhot spleng was ipmorantt!

Submtited by Pual Eills.

A2A and Y2Y: While at the Wildlife symposium at Trent University in Peterborough, I was intrigued by the presentation of the group working to establish a wildlife corridor to link the Algonquin Park in Ontario with the Adirondack Park in New York, akin to the proposed Y2Y (Yukon to Yellowstone corridor). The never-pausing traffic on the 401 is a killing ground and badly needs over, or under, passes for wildlife. One researcher walked the 47-kilometre stretch near Gananoque, counting 45 kills. Their website is www.a2alink.org and the address for donations or membership (\$25 Cdn per year) is Algonquin to Adirondacks Conservation Association, 18 Reynolds Road, Lansdowne, ON, K0E 1L0.

While we have a moral obligation to provide wildlife with a means to safely cross highways, large mammals need a corridor width of up to a 100 miles. This may be feasible just east of the Rockies, but in human-crowded Ontario and New York? Compromises?

Book Reviews



THE LAW OF DREAMS

Peter Behrens, Anansi Press, Toronto, 2006, 394 pages

This is a book today's obese and over-indulged teenagers should read. It reveals what Ireland's teenagers had to do to survive during the potato famine of the 1840s. It is the story of Ferris O'Brien whose family were squatters on the farm run by the Presbyterian Carmichaels for the Earl of Liskeard who lived in Rome. Cattle and sheep were more important than people but Carmichael allowed more Irish, who bred like rabbits, to live in tiny stone and thatch houses on small plots than he needed to farm the land. When the blight hit and people were starving, he offered the O'Briens £2 to move away. Having no place to go they refused, becoming weaker by the day. Finally Carmichael brought in Dragoons to burn down the homes of squatters. As Ferris's family were perishing in the flames, too weak to move, Ferris took off barefoot across the fields to eventually join up with a group of teenage boys and girls who slept in holes cut into the peat and who were living on birds and small animals and by stealing what they could, including leaving older people naked in the cold when they stripped them of their clothing. One of this group, led by a girl, was a young soldier who deserted with his musket after receiving 20 lashes for a minor infraction of the rules.

With death a constant companion, Ferris endured many different associations, eventually getting passage to Liverpool where he worked on railroad construction and in a brothel. Many Irish girls and boys found food and shelter in the sex trade, earning pennies per customer. Finally saving enough, he paid passage to Quebec on a ship crowded with Irish families. Designed for the lumber trade, the owners increased profits by hauling people westbound and lumber eastbound. During the lengthy passage there was a steady toll of people dying of typhus.

A passenger, returning to his lucrative fur trade in western Canada, befriended Fergus, hoping to replace his dead son. After they cleared quarantine, he took ill and died of typhus in Quebec City. Fergus took his purse to buy new clothes, his first shoes, and 4 horses which he intended to walk to Boston where, he heard, he could make a good profit selling them.

Although plagued by the lack of food, shelter, and clothing, Fergus never had any problem in finding sexual companionship. The luck of the Irish, or the authors way of increasing readership?

THE DRUIDS

By Stuart Piggott, Thames & Hudson, London, 1999, 214 pages

Piggott asks in his introduction why has a pre-Roman Celtic religion that was mentioned in literature by a mere 30 Greek and Roman authors, many obscure, and that was vigorously suppressed by the Romans be remembered and practised today? He emphasizes the difficulties in knowing the Druids as they were, rather than as wished-for by modern practitioners, such as the myth of their association with Stonehenge. The book emphasizes the lengthy and painstaking research required to separate truth from bias, the mind sets of historians, and the depiction of more primitive societies as noble savages or as barbaric practitioners of human sacrifice, such as Druids stuffing scores of captives into the legs, arms, and chest of a huge wicker frame of a human, then burning them to death. The Celtic recklessness in battle was said to be due to a strong belief in the immortality of the soul. Druids were described as philosophers, teachers, astronomers, and able to prevent wars. They travelled widely, meeting in remote clearings in oak forests, using symbolic mistletoe. Training for the priesthood took 19 years as so much poetry, lore, and other knowledge had to be memorized.

The Celtic language was oral until 121 BC in Southern France, 58 BC in Gaul, and 43 AD in Britain. This oral tradition still exists. A cousin of mine, Carol McGirr, has made quite a name for herself as a sought-after oral story teller in Canada of old Celtic and Norse tales. I cannot get her to write letters, but can she talk! I have a DVD of a few tales.

Piggott's book contains numerous pictures and drawings of Celtic shrines and habitations over thousands of years. Surprising finds are 30-foot deep shafts containing buried sculptures, pottery, jewellery, utensils, and other objects of daily life as though to communicate with the underworld - and with the current generation of archaeologists. Some of these shafts date back 4,000 years.

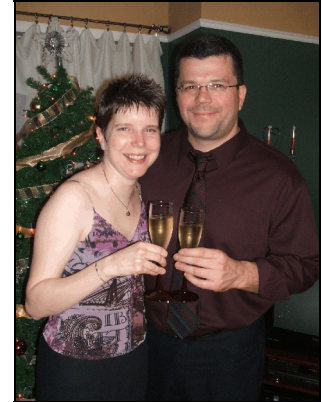
This book acquaints us with numerous authors over thousands of years and the rebirth of the Druids since the 1500s. It does leave us, however, with inadequate knowledge of the real Druids. The needed data remains unavailable.

AIR STRIKES AND CIVILIAN DEATHS: We veterans of Bomber Command are still being castigated for killing 600,000 civilians in WWII with the loss of 73,741 aircrew. We had no smart bombs and, in most cases, few and inaccurate navigational aids. We endured intense and effective opposition. Today we have smart bombs, GPS for pinpoint accuracy, and very little opposition. Why, then, are civilian deaths so high?

Since Baghdad was captured, the USAF has dropped 59,787 pounds of cluster bombs that are banned by all countries except China, Israel, Pakistan, Russia, and the US. Even using precise navigation, a cluster bomb kills in an area the size of a football field and the numerous bomblets that fail to explode in air become mines on the ground, taking a heavy toll of children. Instead of taking out precise targets, helicopter gunships too often demolish rows of houses. From 2005 to 2007 US Army helicopters have flown 974,000 hours in Iraq (NY Times). *The Lancet* (UK medical journal) estimates 655,000 “excess Iraqi deaths” due to the war and that 13%, or 85,150 of these are due to air strikes. The *Washington Post* estimates over 100,000 Iraqi deaths, 46% of them children. As General Tommy Franks admitted, “*We don’t do body counts.*” But, Coalition forces have suffered 3,800 killed which are counted. Wounded are many times that number.

“Pickle barrel” accuracy has been a boast of the Air Force since WWII. It is a myth that still haunts us. We may have the technology but it is nullified by the human factor.

ISABELLE JULIEN is being transferred from Victoria to Ottawa in June and has purchased a house in Gatineau. On 14 July she will marry LCdr Hubert Genest, the Navy Senior Public Affairs Officer who is also transferred to Ottawa. Their initial togetherness will be short as he is training with the VanDoos for deployment to Afghanistan. Our best wishes go to both of them. Their new Gatineau address is: 68, de Pradet, Gatineau, QC, J8T 8S4, telephone (819) 243-4797. julien.i@videotron.ca



THE YOUNGER GENERATION: We Oldies, who remember our not-so-grand schools, argue that the current generation of students is spoiled and unappreciative of the palaces they now have as schools. I was asked to give two hour-long talks, 17 May, at the new immaculate Creekside Middle School to some 200 students on WWII experiences in particular and the human species in general. I was quite impressed at how well behaved and attentive these two large groups were. A real surprise was afterwards when they all, individually, thanked me. Their two young female teachers, Holly Taylor and Malinda Martens, are doing an excellent job.

CONGO, 1960-64: Do we really need all these examples we continue to get on how not to handle world affairs? It is rough on the people at the time who are assigned tasks with inadequate direction, backing, and freedom of action.

In 1960 Belgium granted independence to its Congo colony giving it only 6 months notice to handle the transition under the new PM, Patrice Lumumba (later murdered). The undisciplined army rebelled, granting itself rank and pay increases and harassing Europeans. The province of Katanga broke away under Moïse Tshombe unwilling to share its mineral wealth with the rest of the country. The chaos prompted UN intervention.

Canada was one of the 30 countries that contributed to the 19,828-man UN army and the \$400 million cost. In this 4-year period, command of the UN force changed from Swedish to Irish to Ethiopian to Norwegian to Nigerian generals. 250 UN personnel were killed. John Hall of Ottawa, who was there, relates to us some of his experiences which are not at all flattering to the governments involved that placed severe restrictions on UN forces. Their inability to defend themselves, or Congolese civilians, from lawless Congolese troops inflicted unnecessary sufferings and prevented adequate policing of an intolerable situation.

FRANK FRASER AND THE BROADMOOR CURLING CLUB INTRODUCE CURLING:

At the invitation of the Veterans’ Administration, during the 21st National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, 1-6 April, a team consisting of Frank Fraser, Kathy Avery, John West, and Steve Brown (the director of USCA Wheelchair Development) taught wheelchair and adaptive curling to 59 veterans over a 4-day period at the Aspen Ice Arena, home of the newly reformed Aspen Curling Club. The Winter Sports Clinic, jointly hosted by the VA and the Disabled Veterans of America (DAV), provides disabled veterans with opportunities for self-development, rehabilitation, and challenge through sports and leisure activities. This year over 400 veterans from 47 states participated, including nearly 100 veterans of the Iraq/Afghanistan War.

ZIA UL-HAQ: If any one person can be credited with persuading the Soviets to leave Afghanistan it is Pakistan's president Zia, befriended and helped, then betrayed, by the West. Firmly believing that Allah would provide help, Zia was unruffled by the seriousness of a hopeless situation in which he realized that, ever since Tsar Ivan IV (The Terrible) united the Russias in the 1500s, their expansion had not stopped and that their *drang nach suden* to warm water ports was their reason for invading Afghanistan to be followed by swallowing Pakistan. Only a handful of ill-armed Afghan tribesmen, Zia and his right-hand man, General Akhdar Abdul Rahman Khan, stood in their way. Pakistan was an impoverished nation of 130 million, threatened by both India and the USSR.

Zia, with his broad, infectious smile, could be a great ally or a formidable foe. He knew his only hope was to take the war to the Soviets in Afghanistan in 1986. His Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) had an efficient logistics network of horses, mules, and men. He got the CIA and M16 to supply \$600 million annually to arm the Mujahedin with such effective weapons as Stinger missiles. The Mujahedin exhibited incredible bravery in facing horrendous odds as well as stoic acceptance of wounds and amputations. With mounting casualties, Mikhail Gorbachev, who had come to power, withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989. Allah did provide, with considerable help from Zia.

After secret April 1988 negotiations between Moscow and Washington, a C-130 carrying Zia, Rahman, and the US ambassador, Arnold Raphael, crashed, 17 Aug 1988, killing all aboard. The short-lived investigation, hinting at poisonous gas in the cockpit, was cancelled by the US State Department and Pakistan's new leader, Benazir Bhutto, which led to the widespread Pakistani belief that Zia was murdered by the West because he wanted a strong Pakistani presence in Afghanistan and considered himself a leader of the Muslim world. With the new rapprochement between Washington and Moscow, Zia was a hindrance and was quickly replaced by the compliant and US-educated Bhutto.

TO WARM THE HEART: Koren and Mark Hoovestel are back from 5 weeks in the Ukraine where they adopted 2 brothers, Slava age 10 and Tolia age 4. They were in separate orphanages and had not seen each other for 2 years. Koren reports, "It was an emotional reunion for Slava when we finally went to pick up his little brother "forever". Four days after landing in the US, Slava wanted to go to school, so he went for the last 10 days of the school year. They're both awesome kids and we're just so thrilled and happy to have them." Mark took them to a Colorado Rockies game.

TROUBLED POPULATIONS in millions (UN statistics):

- Jews:** In Israel 5.4, in the USA 5.2, in the rest of the world 2.3 (375,000 in Canada and ½ million in illegal settlements in the West Bank). Total 12.9 million.
- Palestinians:** In Israel 1.4, in the West Bank 2.4, in Gaza 1.4, in Jordan 1.8, in rest of world 2.3. Total 9.3 million (400,000 are in 12 refugee camps in Lebanon). In the occupied West Bank they may use only secondary roads and 546 check points ensure motorists do not drive beyond their own village.
- Iraqis:** 4 million, including a high percentage of the elite, have fled the fighting, mainly to Jordan and Syria. Tiny and resource-poor Jordan, with 50% of its population Palestinian refugees, in under great strain with the resultant surge in inflation, unemployment, crime, and prostitution. The \$500 million in aid promised by Saudi Arabia is slow and inadequate. The US has taken in only 7,000 of these refugees.
- Darfurians:** 200,000 killed and 2.5 million have fled to refugee camps in the deserts of Chad.
- Zimbabweans:** Thousands, trying to flee, are expelled from adjoining countries like South Africa.
- Afghanistan:** Two million women are destitute widows. A mother dies in childbirth every 28 minutes. In 2006 40 teachers were killed by the Taliban. The burka remains more common than ever and women who refuse to wear it are being killed by their male relatives. In Herat province 90 women committed suicide in 2006 by burning themselves. (Lana Šlezić, Canadian journalist).

THE HALIFAX MUSEUM HANGAR in Trenton will close this October for 3-4 months to cement the floor, install air conditioning, and complete other improvements. This stage will cost \$1.8 million. A further \$4.25 million will be required to complete the museum expansion. The Halifax Association now has over 5,000 members. Your \$20 membership will help. Your scribe has application forms and addresses.

CANADA'S LAST WWI VETERAN: When Percy Dwight Wilson died at age 106 in May, it left John Foster Babcock, who will be 107 in July, as the only living Canadian WWI veteran. John insists he is not worth all the fuss. He lied about his age when he enlisted in 1915 at age 15. When he arrived in England authorities discovered his true age, and restricted him to service in the UK. Instead of chasing Germans in France he chased girls in England and had a ball. Of the 644,636 Canadians who served in WWI, only John remains with us. A few WWII veterans are still active, most of whom also chased girls in the UK - obviously a recipe for longevity.

PAPER PROBLEM: I thought this newsletter was a paper problem until I learned that the CIA burns 10 tons of paper daily. I am not sending them a copy.