

971 RCAF AIR MARSHAL SLEMON WING

March 2010
www.971wingafac.com



A Lancaster low pass at Saskatoon airport
26 Oct 09 - see story below:

Air Force Association Newsletter

Social Calendar

Jan	22	66 of us found room to sit down in yet another delightful party at Margit and Roy's.
Feb	20	1730 at the home of Susan Lynch, 30 Polo Drive. Co-hosts Mike, Bob, Chris, and Patty Dooher.
March		Judy and Lew Lomas
Apr		Jim Berwick
May		Joan and Jim Peterson
June		Debbie and Larry Best
July	31	Charlene and Bill Champion
Sep		Shirley and Jim Stewart

SICK PARADE: In December Koren Schonberger-Hoovestol had a H1N1 flu shot. Two weeks later she started to lose her eyesight, losing it completely in her left eye, and learning that she was among the 86 (mostly women) in 10 million who have this optic neuritis reaction. Mark is not due back from Iraq until September so Koren is dealing with this and looking after the two boys alone. After 3 days in hospital and much pain she is starting to get her vision back, but it could take from 4 to 12 months.

CORNER PHOTO: This Mark 10 Lancaster, one of 430 built in Canada, is one of only two still flying. The other is with the RAF Memorial Flight in the UK. A total of 7,781 were built of which 4,171 were lost during WWII. This photo of our Hamilton-based Lancaster was sent by Vic Johnson to the Australian Bomber Command Association who published it on the front page of their Jan 2010 newsletter, editor John Fletcher, a Lancaster veteran. Then Brian Walley, a Whitley veteran, mailed a copy of the newsletter to us. So this photo has gone from Saskatoon to Ottawa to St. Ives, New South Wales to Perth, Western Australia, to Colorado Springs and, as copies of our newsletter go to Saskatchewan, the photo will return to its starting point after an absence of 5 months while being cloned many times.

INPUTS: Please send your thought-provoking essays to georgesweanor@comcast.net

The Editor's Corner

IMMIGRATION

There are a factories out there spitting out Hate and Anti-Everything essays, often laced with foul language, using half truths and outright lies to weave plausible-sounding (to some) warnings, and an obnoxious number of them pollute my computer screen. I find them scary and am often compelled to answer them. To me they backfire. Many decry the erosion of our culture due to the influx of Muslims, Sikhs, Latinos, and what-have-you, even though we, who brutally took over America with its two continents have little legality on which to stand. Let me concentrate for now on immigration.

My Tribal friends cite their fatal error of not recognizing the threat and settling their squabbles to unite against a common foe. My Inuit friends have mixed feelings. They decry the initial wave of missionaries with a barbaric religion based on nailing someone to a cross, the division of this creed into several groups competing for converts, their taking children away for a southern education, then on graduation dumping them back to their families, fit for neither world. They then admit there are recent benefits. The Qallunaat (Whites) are now wiser, bringing relief from feast or famine, providing housing and opportunities that permit village rather than nomadic life, substituting snowmobiles for dog teams, and actually promoting independence and jobs in the White world. The Inuit now increase their worldly belongings even though they do not always increase happiness. Canada now boasts of being one of the world's most culturally-diverse countries. In fact SE Ontario is the world's most diverse, so take a look.

The American Revolution rapidly turned Canada from a French to a bi-cultural country with the influx of United Empire Loyalists (English, Irish, Scots, Welsh, Germans, and Africans) fleeing persecution in the new US. Then, starting about 1845, there was great fear that the Pope was about to take over America from Canada to Patagonia. Potato famines caused a huge influx of Catholic Irish to add to the French/Latin Catholics. The US got the wealthier Irish, accepting only those who could pay their own passage. Canada got the steerage Irish in crowded, disease-laden ships. Toronto jails were full of quarrelsome, drunken Irish unable to find employment. Worse, they brought their religious quarrels with them and there were barn-burnings and bloodshed. Then efforts to populate the prairies brought waves of eastern Europeans. Railroad building brought Chinese labourers. Escaping slaves from the US added to the mix. With bountiful raw resources Canada prospered, attracting refugees from new sources: Africa, Asia, and the Muslim world. As a boy growing up in Ontario with friends from 7 different faiths I was continuously amazed at the ignorance and fears many had of other faiths. To me, much of this was due to insecurity. Also, people who are not considered equals will in defiance cling all the more strongly to their family religious beliefs.

U.S. MELTING POT vs Canadian MOSAIC: In many respects, after 3 generations, it makes no difference. In both countries the use of the native language by grandchildren is down to 1%. Mosaic Canada bans immigrants from continuing homeland customs such as female circumcision, sharia law, honour killings, cockfighting, polygamy, or getting a driver's-license photo while veiled. The host country, however, adopts many of the immigrant food customs and, in some cases like Miami, there are major changes. Here a wave of Spanish speakers and the egress of former inhabitants have made Spanish the majority language. The key, it seems, to retaining original cultural values, is to ensure that immigration comes from a variety of origins and is not allowed to concentrate in ghettos nor to dominate professions as the Irish have with police, Italians with construction, Jews with commerce and entertainment, Pakistanis with transportation and accommodation, Ukrainians with farming and so on. Then you can rely on intercourse to result in integration. Other forces help. My maternal grandparents lived in a section of Toronto that was all Irish. It then became Italian and is now Portugese. Multi-national corporations and the Military are excellent institutions for integration. While in Personnel I deliberately posted people from French to English Canada and vice versa. When I ran NATO aircrew training schools I paired each Canadian with a member from one of the other NATO countries and my wife and I organized weekly dances. I know of 6 marriages (3 English-French, Canada-Denmark, Canada-France, and Canada - UK) that resulted from this and I am sure there must have been more. Socially, our innate shyness leads us to separate into groups, necessitating a few extroverts who promote inter-mingling. Fortunately, among young people, there is a sexual attraction to those from other countries or races. On the whole we are getting better but Hate Groups still disgrace us. Only part of the old ignorance, intolerance, and superiority complexes towards other groups has faded. In my experience it included opposition to the Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, Agnostic, and Muslim religions, to the French, English, and Spanish languages, and to English, Irish, Italian, Portugese, Polish, Icelandic, Turk, Pakistani, and Ukrainian immigrants. Today, it is also safer for Homosexuals and Agnostics to come out of the woodwork - and, surprise, their numbers are growing.

All countries benefit from the diversity and skills brought by immigrants. But, it is vital for us to protect, and to insist on immigrants accepting, the human rights we have achieved over centuries of struggle. The Netherlands is leading the parade in doing this. This is made much easier when we divide immigrant groups among many country-wide localities and avoid them congregating in selected cities. The recent example of dispersing 5,000 Nepalese refugees to communities all across Canada speeds integration. The Military also could do a better job by promoting families to live in the local economy, domestic or foreign, rather than on base housing. (Continued on page 6).

DISTANT and EX-WING MEMBERS CHECK IN:

Bill Cann, a founding member of 971 Wing, is still at the Institute of Ocean Services, adjacent to the international airport, Sidney BC, where 350 scientists, technicians, and analysts from Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Russia, and the US are doing Arctic and Pacific research. Bill and Donna hope to visit Colorado Springs in May.

Diana DeLuca and Sid Bronstein: Diana is now 60,000 words into her 3rd novel. They have moved their RV to a permanent site in Phoenix and are sharing time there with their home in Aurora.

Pat and Wendy Dennis: Pat continues to teach political science as well as marking papers for a military college and having articles published. Wendy is with an accounting firm, while son Christopher is on the road selling green energy and daughter Michelle is giving tours in Ottawa where she claims these days one must be bilingual to compete (which she is).

Bob and Becky Johnson have moved from North Gower to Sherkston, Ontario. They continued their active camping life, this time mainly in Kansas and the Niagara Peninsula. Bob had surgery on his right shoulder that he damaged in a fall while working for the Legion.

McNaughton: Colonel Mike, son of Don and Fran, was posted to Kabul last fall to help re-establish the Afghan Air Force. We wish him well.

O'Blenis: Dave and Loreen celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary by touring that Paradise on Earth called Newfoundland. They also managed to visit Italy. Sadly, they lost David's mother at age 91.

Scott: Gloria has joined the Royal Canadian Legion branch in Green Valley, Arizona.

LAKE MORLIDGE in northern Saskatchewan was so named in 1963 by the Saskatchewan government to honour Arthur, a friend whom I described in the November and January newsletters. In 1964 the family flew a container of water from this lake to pour over his grave in Holland.

SPITFIRES: Of the 20,351 built, in 24 basic variants and flown by 33 countries including 1,000 delivered to the USSR about 50 are still flying worldwide, The RAF Memorial Flight maintains 5 and they make some 700 appearances annually. The 1969 BofB film used 12 Spitfires so filmed as to depict hundreds. Mike Potter, an RMC classmate of Art Nielsen's and Vintage Air president, still flies one at air shows. The going price for an airworthy Spitfire today is £1 million.

Designed in 1931 by RJ Mitchell the first prototype flew in 1936. Mitchell died in 1937 and Joseph Smith became chief designer. The first Spitfire in RAF service was with 19 Sqn, Duxford, 04 Aug 1938. Production ceased in 1948. (including 1,400 in Fort William, Ont.). The 1st operational Hurricane flew in 1938 with 111 Sqn, Northold. 200 were lost in France. At the start of the Battle of Britain, 08 Aug

40, there were 32 Hurricane and 19 Spitfire squadrons. Hurricanes shot down more enemy aircraft than all other defences combined. 2,952 were given to the USSR.

MESSERSCHMITT 109s: inflicted severe losses on us. Some renowned Me109 pilots and their victories: Erich Hartmann 352, Gerhard Barkhorn 301, Hans-Joachim Marseille 158, Werner Molders 115, Adolf Galland 104.

TO FIGHT A WAR: And this waste of production is just a fraction of the total cost of **WWII**.

Aircraft	911,867
Trucks	5,270,942
Tanks	279,580
Artillery pieces	1,094,823
Mortars	767,318
Machine Guns	5,803,247
Warship tonnage	13,092,400
Merchant Ships	48,623,300

CARROTS AND EYESIGHT: We were all led to believe that carrots aided night vision. This, it is now said, was started in the UK in 1939 when the RAF did not want the Luftwaffe to know the capabilities of its radar. Later when both sides had effective radar there was no need for this hoax to explain RAF success at detecting aircraft, but as carrots were plentiful and otherwise good for you the belief was continued.

CURRENT AERONAUTICAL NEWS:

(1) The Toronto island airport is now named for Billy Bishop, Canada's top WWI ace with 72 victories.

(2) Field Aviation of Mississauga completed delivery of 7 Dash 8 Maritime Patrol aircraft to US Homeland Defense. (3) Viking, has added an 84,000 building at its Victoria BC International Airport for the DHC-6 Twin Otter program launched in 2007. \$200 million in orders are backlogged. It also provides worldwide service to deHavilland legacy aircraft.

HEALTHY SPEEDING FINE: A repeat offender in Gallen, Switzerland, was fined \$290,000 for driving at 85 mph in a 50 mph zone. Authorities assumed that anything less would be ineffective as the offender was worth \$20 million.

PHOBOS, one of the two moons of Mars, is now at the head of the queue of candidates for the first human space outpost. Small, with low gravity, it is cheaper to go all that way than to return to our own moon. An irregular-shaped rock only 28 km across, its origin is a mystery, but believed from the outer reaches of the solar system.

YEMEN (AL YAMAN): Population: 21 million, 46% under 15. Literacy (Arabic): 70% male 30% female. Religions: Sunni, Shi'a, Hebrew, Hindu, Christian. Area: 527,970 sq km, arable 2.8%

North Yemen became independent of the Ottoman Empire in Nov 1918. South Yemen (Aden) with its excellent harbour was acquired by the British as a coaling station on the India run. Yemeni groups, FLOSY and FLN fought each other, but united to fight the British who claimed they would grant independence as soon as the Yemeni established a democratically-elected government. The British-trained police and militia became so infiltrated they were unreliable. A steady loss of lives led the UK to pull out in 1967. The rearguard had to fight its way to the docks. FLSY and FLN then had their civil war. The country formed a fragile union in May 1990.

It is one of the poorest countries in the Arab world, with oil the main income. It is home to 62,000 Somali refugees.

President for 2 decades, Ali Abdullah Saleh, is opposed in the north by the Shiite Houthis and in the south by well-armed tribal secessionists. An aristocrat with much blood on his hands, he seeks security, but allowed an extreme jihadist culture to flourish and has welcomed US financial and military support since 2000 for which he is now attacking Al Qaida but US involvement in air strikes against Houthis that killed hundreds of civilians results in more Al Qaida growth.

MILITARY CROSS FOR KATE: Prince Charles pinned it on - the first Royal Navy and the second woman to earn this honour. Able Seaman Kate Nesbitt, caught up in a firefight in Afghanistan, saw a private of the 3rd Commando Brigade fall. Under continued fire she sprinted 70 yards to reach him, to see he was bleeding and choking to death from a neck wound. Under fire for 45 minutes she worked to open a new airway and stem the bleeding, saving his life and staying with him until her comrades were able to force the Taliban to retire. (From Peter Tutt)

OUR FRIENDS - DUNG BEETLES: Eric Warrant began his fascinating career driving around New South Wales looking for fields of cows he could follow to run his fingers through recent gooey droppings to capture dung beetles that had evolved into different species that could see in daylight, dim light, or total darkness. After working for his PhD in Canberra he went on to Lund, Sweden, where Toyota in Brussels discovered his genius and enlisted him to work on night vision cameras and car headlights. Three years of research, adapting Dung Beetle techniques are paying off.

HOCKEY: For the first time Inuit watched an NHL game broadcast in Inuktitut. Games have also been broadcast in Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi, & Italian.

MILKY WAY ORIGIN: David Elbaz's French team of astrophysicists tell us that, once upon a time, a vast cold cloud of gas was peacefully floating in the void of space when it was zapped by a thin jet of matter at tremendous speed, compressing its matter and sparking a burst of star formations, creating a galaxy. This jet was shot out of a canon known as a supermassive black hole. This black hole then merged with the new galaxy to form the nucleus of our Milky Way. (New Scientist, 09 Jan 10).

This is a good point from which to start your genealogy.

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, WRITE A BOOK Ken Blyth, Lancaster pilot of Ottawa who retired to Naples, Florida, tried in vain to locate old POW friends. After publishing a book, *Cradle Crew*, on his own crew, all aged 18, he received a letter in 2005 from David Thomas in Wales with whom he had shared a room in Stalag Luft I. David was a sole survivor of his Lancaster and Ken had included his story in the book.

THE BEAVER MAGAZINE - CANADA'S HISTORY:

Founded in 1920 as a Hudson's Bay Company magazine, The Beaver will change its name to "Canada's History" with the April 2010 issue. The last issue of the Beaver, Feb-Mar 2010, contains 62 pages with 15 articles, 2 pages of letters to the editor, and 5 pages of book reviews. A Winnipeg magazine it is published 6 times a year

It is recommended by this scribe who has been a subscriber since 1946.

SPACE JUNK: We are tracking well over 18,000 pieces that are racing in low earth orbit at speeds of 27,200 kph endangering our people and assets up there. And there could be 600,000 more pieces, quite lethal but too small to detect. The sky is a big place so collisions are few but I am reminded of my first operation. When I looked ahead at the walls of exploding flak illuminating the night sky I was convinced there was not a hole in them big enough to squeeze through our bomber, yet many did - an average of 5 times before that fatal collision. The odds may be a little better in space.

THOSE WHO BLAST OFF ARE CALLED:

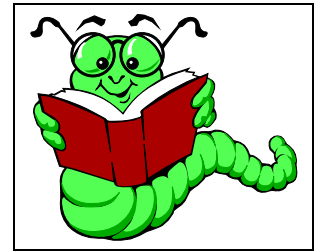
Western World:	Astronauts
Russia	Cosmonauts
China:	Taikonauts
India:	Vyomanauts

Al Qaida and the Taliban have yet to decide.

KANDAHAR: Canada has 2,800 troops in Afghanistan and for 4 years Kandahar operations have been largely Canadian but now Canadian BGen Daniel Menard has more US than Canadian troops under his command.

Book Review

THE TRANSLATOR
by Daoud Hari, Random House, NY, 2009, 207 pages



Daoud (David) Hari, a Zaghawa tribesman, enjoyed his youth in Darfur, the closeness of an extended family with relatives in Sudan, Chad, Libya, Egypt, and the UK., the love and loyalty of his camel, Kelgi, who would share the family home on cold nights, and the rough and tumble games he played with Zaghawa and Arab friends with the girls the dominant athletes due to their more strenuous family responsibilities.

Islam was the accepted religion but most in Darfur clung to pre-Islamic creeds, mainly Christian. There was a universal firm belief in an after life in which they would be reunited with lost friends and family. Darfur, now part of Sudan ruled from Arab and Islamic Khartoum, was in the 1500s a great kingdom stretching into Chad. The name derives from Dar = House and Fur, a people who lived further south but whose king ruled the area in the 1500s. Under the King were hereditary Sultans who appointed well-respected Sheiks and Omdahs to care for the people in a few cities and hundreds of villages. The British left this system in place after they and the French divided the land, creating a French Chad and Cameroons and an Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Independence from the UK in 1956 led to two civil wars, killing 2 million and displacing 4 million.

Daoud blames this on Western and Chinese interests wanting Sudanese underground wealth, prompting the Arab government in Khartoum to rid the surface of its black and Christian inhabitants for unimpeded access to the wealth. It set in motion a process of creating frictions among groups, supporting one, then another to result in continuous warfare that denuded the land. Daoud's village was attacked and burned in 2003. His extended family decimated, Daoud managed to flee into Chad. He ended up in jails in Chad, Libya, Egypt, and Israel as he illegally crossed borders in search of work. He claims the Israeli jails the best with Egyptian the worst, although an old Egyptian jailor befriended him, permitting him to escape deportation to Sudan and certain execution. Being a scholar rather than a warrior, Daoud was determined to fight the despoilers of Darfur by exposing their crimes to the world. He was fluent in Zaghawa, Arabic, and English so made himself known to journalists from Australia, Canada, France, the UK and the US, some of whom we know from current TV news, like Ann Curry of NBC. Daoud has great praise for the courage and determination of these reporters who endured hardships and risked their lives to drive deeply into war-torn lands to interview and observe. Often captured and tortured they had a better chance of survival than their drivers and translators who were usually executed after torture. Daoud became well known throughout Chad and Darfur and friends got him fake Chadian papers and a Chadian name, Suleyman Abakar Moussa.

The two most prominent reporters in Daoud's story are Philip Cox from the UK and Paul Salopek of New Mexico, USA, on a National Geographic contract. Both had Daoud and hired drivers take them into the most dangerous areas. Both were captured and tortured and both, via cell phones, used contacts to save Daoud's life.

Daoud relates many tales of villages burned, men tortured and killed, and all girls and women raped before being killed. All of this by boys as young as 12 to 14, some of whom knew Daoud and his family but relied on the Sudanese government for food and money, so had to follow orders. At times Daoud was able to persuade them to spare prisoners and allow them to flee. Once he was tied to a tree for torture by the Arab Janjaweed after they had finished with a Zaghawa man who had his family flee into a forested area but too late to save himself. From the trees his young daughter saw him being tortured so ran back to protect him. A young Janjaweed ran his bayonet through her stomach and held her aloft to brag to his companions what an aggressive soldier he was. Her blood dripped down on him as she took a long time to die all the while crying for her Dad. A scene Daoud can never forget.

Daoud escaped many arrests, often by knowing the families of the boy soldiers and talking to them while their commanders were absent. On his last incursion into Darfur he had hired Ali and his new Toyota truck with a snorkel to permit driving through water-filled wadis. Against the advice of Daoud and Ali, Paul was insistent on getting deep into Darfur as his allowed time was running out. They were captured, treated as spies, and spent 35 days in widely-scattered prisons that included being tied hand and foot, slung over tree branches, tortured all day, and dumped on the ground, still tied, at night. Paul, at times offered his freedom, refused to desert Daoud and Ali who would be executed. It took Paul's wife, Congressman Bill Richardson, and 3 National Geographic lawyers to plead his case in Khartoum before all three were freed. All wanted Daoud to come to the US but he had to first serve 3 months in jail in Chad for using false papers then a wait in a Ghana jail while Homeland Security cleared him. Daoud has high praise for world relief organizations but criticizes governments allowing oil to hinder actions against genocide.

IMMIGRATION, cont'd: So many of our Problems are self-induced. With its manpower decimated in WWII and its cities, infrastructure, and businesses destroyed, Europe opened its doors to greatly-needed cheap labour, much of it Muslim. Immigrants did a good, too-often-unappreciated, job permitting a remarkable recovery but, instead of going home when no longer needed, they stayed and multiplied. Today they number 5 million in France, 3 in Germany, 1.6 in the UK, 1 in Spain, and 900,000 in the Netherlands and Italy, a mere 5% of all of Western Europe, yet there are many dire warnings of this Islamizing of Europe as a springboard for Islam to take over the world. Mosques are multiplying while Christian churches are increasingly empty and hundreds in the UK have converted to Islam. Why? In 1987 retired Luftwaffe General Rod and Otti Cescotti drove Joan and me to my old POW camp in Moosburg, Bavaria. The town had expanded to the gates of the camp with attractive brick homes. The barbed wire and guard towers had gone but the old barrack blocks were still there. Each long wooden hut had been divided into small homes for Turkish immigrants with a neat flower and vegetable garden in front of each residence. No rubble anywhere but a world apart from the more spacious nearby German homes, yet the whole area seemed quiet and peaceful.

Muslims have no Pope, and no unifying force other than religion for which there are half a dozen major sects, often intolerant of each other. Like us, they do have extremists who nurture real and imagined persecutions.

We tend to ignore signs that integration still works. In Europe the birthrate in the last 15 years of foreign-born Muslim women has fallen in the Netherlands among Moroccan-born from 4.9 to 2.9. In most of Europe it is down from 3.2 to 1.9 for Turkish-born. A sure sign they are fitting in to local cultures: Muslims in Paris are more tolerant of adultery than those in London or Berlin. We do need to prevent ghettos, the concentration of groups into occupations, cities, or schools, and our home-grown youth from deserting our core values for drugs and jihadism.

Admittedly, this is difficult in a free society, but freedom, if it is to remain free, must accept some very-carefully-chosen regulations to prevent anarchy or civil strife, or suicide bombers. Nature ensures that life will remain a struggle, so human barriers are redundant. Avenues to improve one's lot must be available to all.

We humans, like all animate objects, are made of the same ingredients and all are living on a revolving and rotating ball that needs considerable shielding from the nuclear furnace that sustains it. We have come a long way but we still need to overcome our predatory instincts. We also need to defend the advances we have made. Accept the challenge - firmly, thoughtfully, peacefully, and with compassion!

DURA EUROPOS - Siege, Counter-Siege, and Gas Warfare: Fort Europos is an archaeology treasure house. It is on the right bank of the Euphrates near Salhiyé, Syria. Founded by the Seleucids in 300 BC, it was taken by the Parthians in 113 BC, then by the Romans under Trajan in 116 AD who used it as a base for numerous invasions of Parthia, causing its collapse in the 220s AD. It was a short-lived Roman victory because it was replaced by the Sasanian Persian Empire that invaded Syria in 256 AD. We have no written record of the battle but ruins, untouched since the city fell and was abandoned, tell us the story. Since 1928 mainly French and Syrian excavators have been uncovering a wealth of artifacts including 20 Roman soldiers who had been gassed where they stood over 1,750 years ago. The Persians tunnelled under wall towers to collapse them. The Romans tunnelled under Persian siege machines to collapse them. Towers, siege machines and ramps all came tumbling down but many remained upright although several feet lower down. As tunnelling continued the Persians could hear Romans about to break into their tunnel. They threw sulphur and bitumen onto braziers of hot charcoal and withdrew. The first 20 Romans who broke through, pressed by those behind them, were engulfed in hot choking carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide. With them died one Persian who had remained to ensure the chemicals had ignited.

These ruins reveal sophisticated military tactics and how quickly new ideas pioneered by one side become universal. Rome suffered a greater defeat in 260 AD when Shapur the Great captured Emperor Valerian at Edessa.

Rome slowly recovered, and for some 400 years the Romans and Persians co-existed, fought, or collaborated until Islam conquered both.

QUOTES

"If God made everything, he must live in China."

Dennis the Menace

"Never underestimate the difficulty of changing false beliefs by facts."

Henry Rosovsky, economist

"If oxen had gods they would look like oxen," Xenophanes, 570-450 BC, ridiculing beliefs that gods had human form. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, but a little knowledge about the power and importance of knowledge itself might be more dangerous still. This is an area we neglect at our peril."

Ian Pearson, a Swiss futurologist.

"We may be the universe's supreme achievement and its worst nightmare simultaneously."

Bill Bryson, author.

"I wish there was a way to sue for political malpractice."

Christopher Hayes, The Nation Magazine.

FRIENDLY FIRE AND OTHER WWII ODDITIES: (Submitted by Julie Dill)

1. The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China , 1937),
2. The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940),
3. The highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, killed by the USAAC.
4. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.
5. At the time of Pearl Harbor, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us'), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry Division was the Swastika, and Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
6. More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, the chance of being killed was 71%.
7. Japanese Ace Hiro Yoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 enemy planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.
8. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.
9. When allied armies reached the Rhine , the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).
10. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.
11. Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.
12. Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 US and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands . 21 troops were killed in the assault on the island. It could have been worse if there had been any Japanese on the island.

UP THE JOLLY ROGER! Once more we ignorant Westerners are spending scarce resources going after symptoms while ignoring root causes. European and North American navies are now hunting Somali pirates, known to Somalis as their Coast Guard. This desperately poor nation of 9 million relied heavily on its fisheries. When the country collapsed in 1991 European trawlers moved in to steal some \$300 million per year in tuna, having denuded their own seas. Then elements of the Italian Mafia, hired by European hospitals and factories to dispose of hazardous wastes cheaply, dumped this dangerous waste into the unguarded Somali seas. When a tsunami hit, hundreds of barrels of nuclear waste washed ashore killing over 300 Somalis with radiation. With no strong government to speak for them, the pleas of Somalis went unheeded.

This scribe has long argued that force begets force and injustice begets injustice. In the heyday of piracy in the 1600s and 1700s pirates had glamour and sympathy from the common folk and some pirates were actually saved from the gallows by throngs of supporters. Pirates were boys who had been seized by press gangs to serve for long years at sea on naval and merchant ships. Treatment varied with captains but too often it was long and arduous work on poor food, little shore time, and the frequent painful persuasion of the cat o' nine tails and keel hauling. When mutinies succeeded the liberated crews resorted to piracy to survive. Usually they elected their own captains and shared the spoils equally. They also welcomed and treated as equals escaped slaves.

With their fish vanishing, young Somali fishermen started seizing, and holding for ransom, foreign fishing boats. As ransoms mounted they were able to afford better boats and weapons. It was not until they began seizing oil tankers and ships carrying relief supplies that Western navies got involved. Ransoms, now in the million of dollars, also were a factor.

Piracy, of course, must be stopped, but is in not a crime for us to be selective? We can never justify hunting Somali pirates without hunting those who started it all by stealing fish and dumping wastes.

Someday, Hollywood will make movies glorifying young Somali pirates.

THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS ARE NOW OFFICIALLY HAIDA GWAI - and the Haida have been granted \$22 million to buy up logging leases and save their forests. (From my niece, Lisa, a Haida Gwaii resident).

QUANTUM: STEVEN NOVELLA vs DEEPAK CHOPRA

Quantum keeps intruding into these pages. This time in a blast by Steven against Deepak. Steven, a clinical neurologist at Yale, is president of the New England Skeptical Society and berates Deepak for a recent blog in the Huffington Post which Steven calls an anti-scientific rag for publishing it.

Along with early Greek and Roman philosophers, Eastern mysticism has maintained a fascination for us and Deepak has made a career of extolling its benefits to us. We know that the basic beliefs of Hinduism come the closest of all religions to the Big Bang phenomena and that the preaching of Sidharta Gautama (Buddha), Confucius, and the rest provides desirable guides for our conduct, so we are primed for the likes of Deepak. Enter Quantum. If any of you out there understands Quantum Mechanics do publish it as it will earn you a Nobel Prize. Steven accuses Deepak of grabbing what little we know of the Quantum world and extrapolating it to our macroscopic world to argue what mind and consciousness can do. Steven counters with the formula: Wavelength = the Plank Constant divided by mass times velocity which shrinks wavelengths to practically zero as size increases beyond the electron stage so that the coherence of the microscopic world rapidly decoheres and the wave vs particle conundrum evaporates. In other words Quantum has no influence on Consciousness. Your views?

EXTRACTS FROM AN INTERVIEW OF MICHAËLE JEAN BY SCOTT TAYLOR OF ESPRIT DE CORPS:

With Afghanistan, the families of our dead can start the healing process but we also have 300 casualties per 6-month mission, 200 mental and 100 physical, giving families a life sentence to care for them. \$250,000 may be useful at the time but how much will be left in 60 years? We used to discharge wounded veterans but now they may remain in uniform in non-combat roles, a constant reminder to all of sacrifices made."

"I was brought up in Haiti in constant fear of uniforms because they meant violence and oppression: arrests, torture, people disappearing, public executions. Now, when I visit Haiti as Canada's Governor General, I can be proud of what we are accomplishing. Canadian-trained police are bringing an atmosphere of trust and understanding and being more approachable but years will be needed to erase the old fears."

STIMULATING THE LOCAL ECONOMY: Sometime this year, US taxpayers will again receive an Economic Stimulus payment. This is a very exciting program. The government will give back a smidgen of the money we give it. How to spend it to stimulate the economy?

1. If you spend the stimulus money at Wal-Mart, your money will go to China.
2. If you spend it on gasoline, your money will go to Saudi Arabia.
3. If you purchase a computer, it will go to India.
4. If you purchase fruit and vegetables, it will go to Mexico, Honduras, and Guatemala.
5. If you buy a car, it will go to Japan or Korea.
6. If you purchase plastic stuff, it will go to Taiwan.
7. If you pay off your credit cards, or buy stock, it will go to pay management bonuses and be hidden offshore.

Instead, you can keep the money at home by:

1. Spending it at yard sales or flea markets, or
2. Going to baseball, football, or hockey games, or
3. Hiring prostitutes, or 4. Buying cheap beer, or 5. Getting tattoos.

These are the only locally-owned businesses still operating here.

Conclusion: The best way to stimulate the economy is to go to a ball game with a prostitute that you met at a yard sale and drink beer all day until you're drunk enough to go get tattooed.

TAXES: Sorry, Got to leave you to empty my piggy bank to pay my taxes. Relying on me are two governments and hundreds of politicians all of whom claim they are working hard for my interests. Good of them to tell me as I would not recognize this on my own. Congress is in gridlock and Harper has sent Parliament packing for two months, implying politicians are redundant as the Civil Service runs the show anyway. If my interests are being served then they are not belt tightening or taxing me nearly enough. Canada is in much better financial shape perhaps because it ranks 33rd highest while the US is 48th among world countries in taxes levied. Also it lacks a huge empire to control. While Canada takes most of my taxes, it is still not enough to avoid deficits. The US is #1 in owing \$13.6 trillion to other countries while Canada ranks #15 owing \$762 billion. The US is so much more in need of my money that they tax some of what Canada has already taxed. I have expressed many remedies in these newsletter pages but, as the newsletter falls somewhat short of being a media conglomeration, it lacks the power to influence. Pity!

I should be grateful they do not demand more of my money - but, my peace of mind is shattered by that howl of anguish coming from future generations and I wonder how much of that is my fault? I would happily pay taxes if I could feel they were solving our problems and not just paying interest on what is owed to the rest of the world.