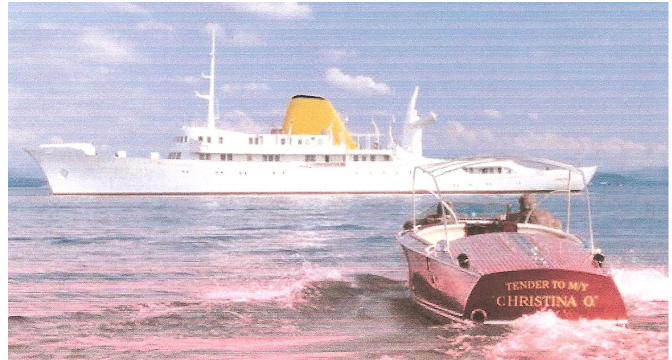


# 971 AIR MARSHAL SLEMON WING

## RCAF ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

# May 2012

Colorado Springs  
[www.971WingAFAC.com](http://www.971WingAFAC.com)



HMCS Stormont - as its WWII crew never saw it.  
See page 3

## Social Calendar

- Mar 03 The private room at the El Padrino Mexican restaurant held 25 of us for a social evening.  
Apr 19 The Wing outing at the Colorado Mountain Brewery was enjoyed by 24.  
May 28 Memorial Day. 1100 at The Retired Enlisted Association, east off Murray, Dress: blazers, grey slacks, medals, headdress. See you all there!  
June Berwick: Jim will host us again. Details TBA  
July Champion: Charlene will continue the annual Champion feast.

**PLACES I HAVE, HAVE NOT, BEEN:** I have been in many places, but not in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito. No one recognizes you there. I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my friends, family, and work. I live close so it's a short drive. I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore. I have also been in Doubt, a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often. Some say I have been in Ept too often. I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm. Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I get older. One of my favourite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenalin flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get! And, sometimes I think I am in Vincible but life shows me I am not. People keep telling me I'm in Denial but I'm positive I've never been there! I have been in Deepdoodoo many times; the older I get, the easier it is to get there. I actually kind of enjoy it there. I am highly annoyed at my travel agent. She got me a lengthy stay in Continent and has yet to send me a return ticket. (From Jim Daugherty).

**THE QUEEN WILL UNVEIL, 28 JUNE, A BELATED MEMORIAL FOR BOMBER COMMAND.** It was a major factor in winning WWII, fighting the longest continuous battle and suffering 59% casualties. But it was snubbed after the war as officials became ashamed of the nasty job they had given us to do. Over a decade ago my POW friend, Air Commodore Clarke, started a memorial-fund-raising drive. Seeing no action in Ottawa, we few surviving veterans led a letter-writing campaign that eventually succeeded in getting a \$100,000 government gift to the fund, an airbus laid on for veterans and officials, plus all expenses paid for 25 veterans still capable of making the trip. Other Commonwealth countries took similar actions earlier. LGen Tom Lawson was helpful in getting this scribe's letter into the right hands.

## Food for Thought Netanyahu and Jenkin's Ear

Am I missing something? We have real atrocities in places like Bahrain, Palestine, Mexico, and Syria, but I just cannot find any honest reason for our current persecution of Iran. Sure we dislike the regime but so do most Iranians who now dislike us because of all the harm we have caused a nation that in modern history has never launched a war of choice. And now we have the gall to use it as a cover up. Reminds me of Jenkins' ear. When building colonies in the Caribbean, Britain tolerated many provocations from Spain because it was unprepared for war. Years later, when prepared, there were no excuses for war . . . until, in a minor 1731 incident, the brig, Rebecca, was boarded by the Spanish, its cargo seized, and Captain Robert Jenkins' ear sliced off in the scuffle. In 1738 his encased ear was paraded in the House of Commons and used as an excuse to declare war on Spain which resulted in 20,000 casualties and 407 ships sunk as the war evolved into the Austrian Succession dispute. Today, Netanyahu, needing to distract world condemnation from his continued persecution of, and stealing land from, the Palestinians, and in spite of extremely good relations between the people of Israeli and Iran, latched on to a few words spoken by Ahmadinejad that Israeli should be wiped off the map and that the Holocaust never happened, ignoring the rest of his rhetoric that the Holocaust was caused by Europeans and should be compensated for by Europeans and not Palestinians, and that Jews have a perfect right to live in Palestine but not in a state superimposed and run exclusively by them.

The current Iranian government is no threat to the US; it is no threat to Israel; it is a threat to Iran. It has many reasons to distrust us. Persia, 2500 years ago, was the world's first, and most benevolent, empire. Later, in 1828, Russia seized Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan from it and in 1881 Turkmenistan. In 1907 the UK and Russia divided Persia into spheres of influence, then in WWI, both moved in. The UK stayed to exploit the oil, most useful in converting the Royal Navy from coal to oil. In 1935 Persia became Iran. In WWII it was occupied by the UK, US, and USSR, who still exploited its oil. In 1951 democratically-elected Mossadegh made social reforms and nationalized the oil. This democracy, like the one in Gaza, hurt our interests so we, the CIA and MI6, engineered a 1953 coup that re-installed Shah Reza Pahlevi who made some reforms like female suffrage, and Iran did serve on UN peacekeeping missions in the Congo and Golan Heights. The US had Iran start a nuclear program, hoping to sell it 18 reactors and had no objections to it having nuclear weapons. In 1979 dislike for the Shah's harsh police and his heavy reliance on US power led to the "Islamic Revolution" that returned exiled Ayatollah Khomeini who scrapped the bomb program as un-Islamic. In 1980 Saddam's Iraq, backed by the West, invaded, taking a million lives and using western-supplied poison gas on Iran that had banned such weapons. Iran then backed about 30 killings around the world while we killed all 290 aboard an Iranian Airbus and froze Iranian assets.

What is vital to realize is that the entire Middle East teems with minorities with unfulfilled dreams and that many are still persecuted. We need to show respect and understanding and support those among us who have provided genuine and selfless help. We are too prone to label groups like Hezbollah and Hamas as terrorist. Yes, Iran has helped them, but they are not puppets of Iran but indigenous responses to Israeli invasions, slaughter, and destruction. Like so many other countries, Israel has been its own worst enemy. Pity, as it could be the area's hope.

Iran banned biological weapons in 1973 and chemical in 1997. It signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Israel, India, and Pakistan have not, yet we punish Iran merely on suspicion that its enrichment of uranium could be used to make a bomb against Israel's 200. In 1992 isolated Iran started building its own weapons and does have 550,000 under arms at an annual cost of \$9 billion. Israel spends \$50 billion and has 3 million available for instant service. Both use conscription. No match for the US that spends more than the rest of the world combined. Utter Madness!

Surely, Netanyahu is not so stupid as to actually bomb Iran, but he has succeeded in getting US bunker-busting bombs and in removing his aggression from the US public eye. He is like the spoiled child who escapes a good spanking with a tantrum or two then extracts gifts for the promise of better behaviour. He seems intent on destroying the peaceful future Israel could build, and he harms his benefactor, the US.

Perhaps that is one reason the US ranks only 28<sup>th</sup> among world governments. Preoccupation with endless and costly electioneering precludes firm stands in the interest of humanity.

**HMCS STORMONT, K327, to CHRISTINA:**

Built by Canadian Vickers in Montreal, K327 and its crew saw service on the dangerous Murmansk run and was one of 57 RCN ships in the D-Day assault on Normandy. It also holds the RCN record for the longest time at sea - 63 days.

In late 1945 it was sold for a small fraction of its cost and in 1950 resold to Aristotle Onassis who renamed it Christina after his daughter and spent \$4 million refurbishing it with 19 luxurious staterooms then entertained such notables as Churchill, JF and Jackie Kennedy, King Farouk, Grace Kelly, Prince Ranier, Marilyn Monroe, Greta Garbo, and Elizabeth Taylor. A further \$54 million was spent in 1999. Improvements were made in Kiel by Caesar Pinnau who had designed Hitler's Berchtesgaden retreat. You could rent the ship for \$60,000 per day or for \$3,000 take an overnight cruise out of Monte Carlo. It is now on a 4-month visit to the UK where you may take a 1-hour tour for £15.

**DRONES:** Has the use of drones made war more acceptable to those who own them? Operators in comfortable offices deep in the heart of the US have so far killed 3,000 of whom at least 780 were innocent civilians in far away destitute lands. This puts a different outlook on war than meeting a man face to face and ramming a bayonet into his stomach or to flying through flak-filled skies night after night while raining down death and destruction.

Nevertheless, we now have cases of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder among the 1,100 US drone pilots for the 7,000 drones in service.

Some of this, you may argue, is due to the long hours of eye strain seeking radar targets, but much is due to the need to study the views of dead bodies and to assess the destruction to guide future strikes.

Different studies give different figures but PTSD averages appear to be 15% for Afghanistan survivors and 36% for drone operators.

It appears the old human reluctance at killing is still alive among many of us. Yet, the US is training 350 drone pilots per year, more than fighter and bomber pilots combined. Frightening!

**THE CANADIAN BILL OF RIGHTS** is now surpassing the US Constitution as the document most emulated by others.

**LARRY MILBERRY'S** latest volume featuring the Canadian contribution to WWII Bomber and Coastal Commands has been chosen as Book of the Month by 2 aviation magazines: the UK *Flight Bag* and *Classic Aircraft*. I cherish my copy but Larry admits he wishes he could have completed it 20 years ago when more veterans were around to appreciate it. Of Bomber Command's 125,000, the Luftwaffe killed 38%, accidents 7%, wounded 8%, 8% POWs, while the Grim Reaper has culled the remainder relentlessly.

**THE PRICE OF PETROL:** You may have noticed that as the price advances to \$4 and beyond there is no let up in the endless streams of cars, most with only the driver, implying the cost is still too low. Makes me remember those happy days when, as a kid in Toronto, I trailed horse-drawn vehicles to pick up manure for our backyard garden. Cars, then, were also a nuisance. They interfered about every third inning with the softball games we used to play on the street as we had to clear a passage whenever one came along. Today cars are most useful in providing faulty data for opponents to blame governments for the high cost of gas which is a world commodity with international cartels and speculators setting the price as well as remaining oil deposits being of the more-expensive type to extract. The US does waste a lot in consuming 20% of world supply while providing only 9% but increased production in North America would do little to bring back cheap gas. How refreshing to see the rebirth of cycling.

**NOW, THAT IS A SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM:** Six hours after receiving an SOS from 675 fishermen stranded on an ice floe that had broken off and was drifting into the Sea of Okhotsk, North Pacific, the team on Sakhalin Island had rescued all 675, half by helicopter, half by boat.

**ESPRIT DE CORPS MAGAZINE** has now sacrificed 8 pages in the last 3 issues to publish selections from our newsletters and the blog site of yeoldinquisitivescribe and has several more selected for future issues.

**CARMEN and DON SWIFT** are wandering around Europe for 5 weeks.

# Book

## Reviews



Good books are published far faster than I can read, or review, them, but I do appreciate our governments in what we call The Free World that, for all their faults, permit dissent and criticisms. It does complicate life as we sort through a million shades of grey to uncover Truth that eventually exposes itself in somewhat different forms to each investigator. Here are 3 among scores that provide insight into the Middle East:

**TREACHEROUS ALLIANCE by Trita Parsi, Yale University Press, 2008, 359 pages**

**A SINGLE ROLE OF THE DICE by Trita Parsi, Yale University Press, 2012, 284 pages**

**THE CRISIS OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION by Ali. A. Allawi, Yale University, 2009, 304 pages**

Trita Parsi, a Middle East expert, appears on the BBC, PBS, CNN, and other outlets. In his *Treacherous Alliance* he describes the interplay of Iran-Israel-US policies since 1948 and how both Iran and Israel work to manipulate US policies and how the US fears the loss of its dominance. He blames Sunnis, not Iran-backed Shias, for 90% of US casualties. For his *Single Role of the Dice* book about Obama's policies he interviewed 140 top officials in Iran, Israel, and the US. He includes the text of the 2003 Iranian reach-out for friendship with the US that was snubbed by the US, a snub that now serves as a major cause of the current impasse. He reveals the respect Jews and Iranians have for each other, going back 2700 years when thousands of Jews were resettled in Persia, when the Persians freed the Jews from Babylonian captivity and rebuilt the Jerusalem temple. Jews went to a single god after living in Persia with Ahura Mazda as the sole universal god. The 25,000 Jews with their synagogues, schools, and hospitals now in Iran have never been harmed while 200,000 Iranians live peacefully in Israel. Both consider themselves a superior people to Arabs. He criticizes Obama trying to out-hawk the Republicans as a betrayal of his values and unlikely to succeed as there is always a Republican to up the ante as they did with the Clinton administration.

Ali Allawi was born in Bagdad in 1947. He has degrees from MIT, London School of Economics, and Oxford. He has held positions at Oxford and Princeton. Active in Iraqi politics for 30 years, he opposed the Baathist regime and served post war as Iraq's Minister of Defence, Trade, and Finance. He is the author of *The Occupation of Iraq - Winning a war, losing a peace* in which he claims the US looks for enemies but in the wrong places. In his new book he argues Islam has been in crisis for 200 years and whether damage done will terminate Islamic civilization is the subject of this great book that must be read slowly as Ali, with a foot in each world, cites so many Western and Islamic thinkers. Here are a few thoughts of Punjabi Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) who studied at Cambridge and Munich, admired the dynamism of the West, but thought its philosophies inferior to Islam:

“Humans find fulfilment in the uniqueness of the individual. Islam provides this foundation. Sharia constraints ensure the pathway to fulfilment is not chaotic. Islamic History is the unfolding of actions of inspired individuals: This world gives us an invitation to look for every secret is given an instant to leap out of its closet. If I am the end of all, then what lies beyond? Where lies the limit of my unending adventure?”

Today, with ancient Agnosticism on the rise with its open and inquiring mind seeking the Truth and what is good in all beliefs and behaviours, it behoves us to delve into the minds and lives of others in order to understand and better ourselves.

## 971 WING

While the following remains part of the data on the 2-page Membership List sent periodically to all members, it is summarized here for the benefit of non members who may or may not be interested:

<b>President:</b>	Dave Bristow	<b>Past President:</b>	Joan Peterson	<b>Vice President:</b>	Darrell Levitt
<b>Ceremonial:</b>	Darrell Levitt	<b>Secretary:</b>	Bob Freimuth	<b>Treasurer:</b>	Lew Lomas
<b>Membership:</b>	Larry Best	<b>Social:</b>	Valerie Freimuth, Jim Berwick		
<b>Newsletter:</b>	George Sweanor	<b>Regular Force Liaison:</b>	Major Bradley MacAskil		

**Bob Freimuth** prints the 50 snail-mail copies of the newsletter while **Carol Nielsen** organizes most of the restaurant parties with help from **Valerie Freimuth** who has also been a big help in proofreading the newsletters for typing errors that Gremlins keep inserting. **Paul Ellis** keeps our web site up to date. Railroading, known as electioneering in polite circles, occurs every May. We have 95 members.

**DUES** (Collected by 01 April):

For Colo. Spgs area members: \$60.00  
For others: \$45.00  
(\$44 of this goes to Ottawa for AFAC dues)  
Dues include a subscription to *Airforce Magazine*  
And the *Wing newsletter*

**HOUSE PARTIES;**

Dinner parties: \$20 per couple at the door to reimburse the hosts who provide the meat and drinks. Each couple is asked by phone or e-mail to bring a bring a dish (hors d'oeuvre, vegetable, or dessert).  
Cocktail parties: \$10 per couple, each couple bringing an hors d'oeuvre or desert.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **FEELING DOWN AND OUT AND UNIMPORTANT? THEN ENJOY YOUR OWN BODY:**

Your value is immense. Ten trillion human cells and 100 trillion live-in bacterial cells toil ceaselessly to make you what you are. Feel comfortable with them and show them a little gratitude. Like you, they believe they are independent. They form 300 million feet of blood vessels, 600 muscles, 206 bones, and 100,000 miles of myelin-coated nerve fibres.

Over all of this empire your brain has a measure of control which can be friendly or abusive. It has up to 1,000 trillion synapses and 100,000 billion connections, and generates more brain electricity than all the world's telephones combined. Depending on the location and need, your nerves send signals at speeds ranging from 1 to 268 mph.

Atoms and cells come and go. Some in your body have almost the same age as the Cosmos since the Big Bang. Some have cycled through various life forms as well as historical human celebrities. It is the structures they build that creates you. Cell life ranges from a few days in the stomach to 7 years elsewhere except for your brain neurons that last your lifetime. Well, yes and no. Millions of memories depend on networks of millions of neural connections all in the same space. As some neurons die new ones are born with a tendency to mix in new memories and some old ones may be lost so, if you want a lifetime of accurate memories, maintain an autobiography.

But do respect and treasure every inch of that incredible machine that is you.

**20 CRATED SPITFIRES** were buried 40 feet deep in Burma before Japanese overran the area. David Cundall, a Lincolnshire farmer, made 12 trips, spending £130,000, to eventually locate them and PM David Cameron, during his Burma visit and meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi, has negotiated their return to the UK where it is hoped to return them to flying condition.  
(Submitted by Bob Tracy).

## Jane Sumner and Nepal

I took a trip to Nepal with my brother in November. The purpose was to pursue the passion of a friend who had planned on working, upon retirement, on aiding the children of the rural mountain villages of Nepal. Unfortunately, this never came to pass as he died suddenly of a heart attack.

We flew to Kathmandu and trekked to the rural villages of the Dhading District. We left the city on a 3 hour bus ride to be followed by a 5 hour jeep ride through pretend roads and river beds. We then embarked on a trek ascending high mountains and descending into river valleys for 2 long days. We wanted to see the living conditions, classrooms and the poor children of these mountain villages. We connected with an organization called HEED (Health, Education, Empowerment & Development), a nonprofit organization that is seeking funding to pursue assistance for these children. They have succeeded in hiring 2 teachers for 100 students and acquiring school supplies. They also have received materials for building a school.

The people are subsistence farmers and literally must obtain supplies in Dhading Besi on the same route that we took. They have to walk for days and all materials are brought in on the backs of donkeys, men and women. The children are taught the ways of their parents whether it be goat herding, planting or harvesting rice, millet or corn. The cooking is done in the house which is a rock structure and the fire pit is on the floor. Dal Bhat (lentils, rice and curried vegetables) is the typical dish which we ate every single day. There is no ventilation other than the door and breathing is difficult but no one seems to be concerned. Interestingly enough, each house has a solar panel to power 1 lightbulb. Maybe we should take a lesson!!

There appears to be a social hierarchy, even in the remotest and poorest villages. As we entered one village, there were a group of children in rags, aging perhaps from 3 to 12 years, reminding me of the Untouchables in India. It was obvious they received no education. As we moved further in to the town we met other children outfitted in school uniforms (uniforms were the norm for school kids). The schools we viewed were sparsely furnished with roughly constructed wood desks, no windows and few educational materials.

From one perspective, their lives seem very simple and self sustainable but as the young people go to the city and are exposed to another lifestyle they will need education to survive. Unfortunately, their progress requires support from the outside world.

We were gone for the month of March to other parts of the world ie. Brazil, Madeira, Tenerife, Casa Blanca and Savona, Italy.

**FRANK and IDA FRASER**, recognizing that, in my 93<sup>rd</sup> year, I had reverted to my childhood fear of the dark, volunteered to drive us to our Wing social at the El Padrino restaurant. On the return, while mounting the steps to our front door, I tripped and fell permitting my head to make a striking acquaintance with a brick planter. As the recent and rapid decline in Joan's eyesight made it awkward for her to exercise her once-excellent nursing skills, Ida stepped in, cleaned and dressed the 4-inch wound then she and Frank stayed for an hour to change dressings until the blood stopped seeping. Ida did a professional job. The wound has healed and my hair has returned to grey rather than red. But then they went off camping for 3 weeks allowing me to have 3 more bruising falls, destroying my faith in scientists who claim gravity is a weak force.

Seems all I am good for anymore is to sit at this computer converting verbal diarrhea into blogs and newsletters. I do hope I am not contributing to global warming.

**GOOD NEWS FROM AFGHANISTAN** is reported on 8 pages in the current issue of *Canada's History* highlighting Canadian successes such as 50 schools, the Kandahar University, the anti-polio campaign, the \$50 million rebuilding of the Dahla Dam Irrigation system that was built by the US in 1952, then destroyed by war and neglect and silted up. Without a death, 500 km of canals were restored, the dam repaired, and 70,000 hectares irrigated for wheat and barley. Widows were trained for the delicate work of harvesting saffron (worth \$17 a gram). This affects 80% of Kandahar's population thus building anti-Taliban resistance. Explained is the training of civilians to work with the army and Afghans in the delicate task of getting a needed job done in spite of hostilities, suspicions, and jealousies not only among Afghans but also among individuals in various governmental organizations who resent other agencies infringing on their cherished responsibilities.

## Bob Johnson Reports In

Many of you remember Becky and Bob who did two tours at NORAD here, 1981-85 and 1989-92. They retired in North Gower, Ontario, where they both contributed greatly to community welfare with volunteer work, Bob with the Canadian Legion and firefighters and Becky gracing several towns with wall murals of historical scenes as well as theatrical backgrounds and landscaping. They moved to Sherkston in 2009 so they could bask in sunshine while watching the clouds dumped snow on Buffalo across the lake. They continue to enjoy camping out.

“We seem to be at a crossroads in our history. The threat of global warming, although decried by some among us seems to be a well-accepted fact for most. Our past winter here in southwestern Ontario, if it is indeed a harbinger of winters to come, signals a climate change with consequences as yet unknown. Lake levels continue to fall, and there is now some talk of damming Lake Huron to raise it back to historic levels. We have been told by local experts that Lake Erie used to lap at our property: now it is a mile away.

What will that do to Lakes Erie and Ontario? Nothing good and not the least of possible outcomes is the amount of water going over Niagara Falls. Not important in the greater scheme of things, you say? Where will all the water be to generate electricity on both sides of the border? What happens to the tourist business? Who would want to come here to see a mere piddle of water fall 250 feet.?

We have a very vocal minority here who object collectively to any alternate means of power generation, arguably the most important cog in the industrial gear train. We read tirades about the evils of wind generation, nuclear power, oil and gas powered electrical generation systems, but nobody seems to be able to suggest any alternatives... Maybe Albertans were right 35 years ago when the New Energy Plan was introduced. “Let the eastern bastards freeze in the dark”. Today in the Toronto Star there was a column in the business section announcing that there was currently 300 years of petroleum products in the ground to power North America at current usage levels. Much frothing at the mouth by the Greens is expected shortly. Big business has decided that they shouldn’t be troubled about petty laws and treaties: money must be made without thought of the consequences.

We have such serious problems ahead, that one would think that there is a great deal of discussion among the younger generations for whom this will have the most impact. But one would be wrong. I see frequent comment on the narcissism of our younger members of society. The current crop of 20 and 30 year olds do not seem interested in the least about what is happening in the real world. Elections: we never vote. Newspapers: don’t have time or interest to read. History: boring. Books: meh. Just leave us alone with our electronic games and devices and don’t bother us with what is happening in the world. It does not seem to have sunk into Generation Y that facebook and U tube and all the other social media can and have been used for ulterior and possibly sinister purposes. Once a picture or a comment has been let loose into the social media environment, it is there forever, and anyone who wants to can read and use it for their own purposes. Opinions, masquerading as facts are accepted without thought. Many companies now will not hire without possession of the applicant’s media passwords. Those who fail to comply are shown the door. Video cameras sprout on every corner, monitoring every move. The fewer there are of us, and the more of those detracted from reality and our shrinking personal freedoms will continue to vanish, as will democracy. George Orwell was right. We are going to hell on a handcar.

One has only to look at the latest US presidential campaign. Those bozos (bozii?) who have no other program but to unseat the incumbent are doing a great disservice to themselves and the nation. No plan, no reasoning, and no rationale for being. Politics has become a game of “gotcha”, and 15 second sound bites now pass for policy statements. God help us all!

There is not a day goes by that I’m not glad I retired 15 years ago. I fear for the future: our freedoms, our country, and ourselves. The only comfort I have is that I won’t be around when the crash comes.”

# 67 YEARS SINCE LIBERATION

BY DARRELL LEVITT

It has been 67 years since the liberation of Holland in World War II and yet the Dutch people still pay homage to Canadians.

On May 5, 1945 Col-Gen Johannes Blaskowitz surrendered the remaining 117,000 German troops in the Netherlands to Canadian Lt. Gen Charles Foulkes of the First Canadian Corps ending nearly eight months of bitter and difficult fighting.

On March 23, 1945 the Allied forces began the assault across the Rhine. Although the First Canadian Army as such took no part in the crossings, the troops of the 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade, under British Command participated in the crossing of the Rhine at Rees, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Parachute Battalion, dropped successfully east of the river near Wessel. Several days later the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division crossed the Rhine and fought its way to Emmerich.

Canadian Forces played an important role in liberating the Netherlands. Canadians who landed on D-Day fought through France, Belgium, the Scheldt, and in Germany before being dispatched back to the Netherlands with the Canadians who had fought in Italy. Canadian orders were to push the German troops occupying the Northeast back to the sea and to drive German troops in the west back to Germany.

On April 28, 1945, the Canadians negotiated a truce with the Germans, which permitted relief to enter the western Netherlands and end the "Hunger winter. To show their appreciation to the aircrew who dropped food from the air, many Dutch people painted "Thank you, Canadians" on their rooftops. In honour of their gift of freedom, the Dutch people have donated 10,000 tulip bulbs to Canada for the National Capital Region annually since the war's end.

In 2000, the Dutch government struck a Thank you Canada medal on the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of The Netherlands. These medals were presented to members of the Canadian Forces who served in the Liberation of The Netherlands or their spouses if the member was deceased.

There remains today a very strong bond between Canada and The Netherlands that time will not fade.



**CONVINCING PARENTS THEY DID SOMETHING RIGHT:** While here to celebrate Joan's 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday, our 5 daughters, Barbara, Diane, Valerie, Patricia, and Linda, did a blitz on our large yard, trimming trees, cutting grass, edging, weeding, and landscaping including planting 13 new perennials.

I am trying to talk Joan into having a birthday every month.



