

26 XII



Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 5 Newsletter of Brandon's Military Museum Fall and Winter 2014

26 FIELD REGIMENT RCA/XII MANITOBA DRAGOONS MUSEUM• BRANDON MB

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Museum information



Photo Tracy Fells

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae MD



38 ATG receives a new Commanding Officer



*LCol Melvyn Neville, CD
Photo by CAF*

Our congratulations to LCol Melvyn Neville, CD, the new Commanding Officer of 26th Field Regiment RCA and 38 Canadian Brigade Group, Artillery Tactical Group. LCol Neville assumed command of the Regiment on Saturday the 25 Oct 2014 at King OP on the range at CFB Shilo.

The Museum wishes to thank LCol Dave Dalal, CD the former Commanding Officer for his support of the Museum during his tenure. We wish him well in his future career.

Brandon Vigil

Veterans from Brandon and area gathered at the Cross of Sacrifice in the Brandon's Veteran Cemetery to honour WO Patrice Vincent and Cpl Nathan Cirillo. At 1100 am on the 28th of October 2014 Veterans from ANAFVETS Unit 10, Royal Canadian Legion, Sapper Christopher Holopina CAVUNP, 26th Field Regt RCA, 26 Fd Regt RCA/XII MB Dragoons Museum and Defenders MC Chapter 19 MB laid wreaths and said prayers of remembrance for Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo who were murdered in terrorists attacks in St Jean-sur-Richelieu Quebec and Ottawa Ontario. The Vigil was part of a spontaneous show of support by Veterans, Veterans groups and ordinary citizens of Canada held across the country on the day of Cpl Cirillo's funeral in Hamilton Ontario. WO Vincent's funeral was held on the 1st November 2014 in Longueuil Quebec.



Veterans pay respects to fallen comrades



*AI Dunham ANAFVETS
Unit 10 Past President
Vigil Emcee*



Rev. Dr. Glenn Ball leads the prayer

Dedication M-109 Self Propelled Howitzer CFR 85-77229

On the 1st of November at 1:00 pm Family of the late LCol Thompson, Soldiers, Veterans, Police, Army Cadets, Regimental Senators, Museum Volunteers and Citizens of Brandon and Area gathered to witness Rev. Dr. Glenn Ball consecrate the M-109 Self Propelled Howitzer as a Military Monument. On a beautiful autumn day the sun shone on all gathered to hear Don Barry Colonel (retired) speak about the history of the Canadian Artillery and 26th Fd Regt RCA as a self-propelled artillery unit. He also spoke about LCol Ross Thompson to whom the gun is dedicated. The short and moving ceremony was emceed by 26XII Museum Curator Edd. McArthur. In attendance was the newly elected Mayor of Brandon his Worship Rick Chrest, Honorary Colonel R. Felstead, CstJ, CD, 26 Fd Regt RCA; LCol M. Neville CO 38 ATG; CWO D. Sembalarus, CD RSM 38 ATG; LCol D. Dalal, CD Past CO 38 ATG; Honorary LCol L. Dangerfield, 26 Fd Regt RCA; Soldiers of 26 Fd Regt, Mrs. B. Coleman Former Hon Col 26 Fd Regt RCA; Former Commanding Officers, Former Regimental Sargent's Majors; 26 Fd Regt RCA Regimental Senate; Brandon Police Service Representative; Museum Volunteers; Friends of the Museum (FOMI); RCACC 2520 Cadets, and citizens of the Wheat City. The plaque placed on the M-109 Monument reads as follows:

This M-109 Self Propelled Howitzer is dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant Colonel Ross Thompson, CD and to the Soldiers of 26th Field Regiment RCA Past, Present and Future. The Monument was placed by the 26th Field Regiment RCA/XII Manitoba Dragoons Museum Volunteers on 14 August 2014.



***Memorial plaque being installed by
Rapid City Memorials***



***Bobby Jo Cooper and Jay Woloski
Craftsmen from RCM***



***Edd. Mc Arthur
26XII Museum Curator***



***Museum Board President
Don. Berry, CD Col (retired)***



***Rev Dr. Glenn Ball
St. Andrew's Church***



***Emcee Museum Curator
Edd. Mc Arthur, CD Capt (retired)***



LCol Ross Thompson Family in front of M-109



Jacquie Thompson



M-109 Dedication Plaque

Rededication 45 Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force

***A moth-eaten rag on a worm-eaten pole,
It does not look likely to stir a man's Soul,
'Tis the deeds that were done 'neath the moth-eaten rag,
When the pole was a staff, and the rag was a flag."***

Sir Edward Hamley on seeing some old Colours of the 43rd Monmouth Light Infantry in Monmouth Church

On Sunday the 9th November 2014 Soldiers of 26th Field Regiment RCA lead by LCol Melvyn Neville, CD and Regimental Sergeant Major CWO Dan Sembalerus CD, accompanied by Hon Col Rick Felstead, CStJ, CD, Hon LCol Lori Dangerfield, Members of the Regimental Senate, Volunteers from 26 Fd Regt RCA/XII MB Dragoon Museum and Members of Friends of Museum INC. (FOMI) joined Bishop Jim Njegovan and the congregation of St. Matthew's Cathedral for the rededication of the Colours of 45 BN CEF. My thanks to Bishop Njegovan for the excellent service my thanks to 26 Fd Regt representative Capt Travis Rivard and to Museum representative John and Lorna Ball for a job well done on the organization of rededication. The Last Post was played on the 45 BN CEF Bugle last used in 1915, the sound of the bugle was beautiful, many thanks to Lt (NL) Dan Robertson for playing the bugle for the rededication. Thanks to the 26 Field Pipes and Drums for performing at the service.



*The CO, RSM, Hon Col and Soldiers of
26th Field Regiment RCA
In the pews of St Matthews*



*Lt (NL) Robertson
and Bugle of the
45 BN CEF*



*The Colours of the 45 BN CEF will now
hang permanently in the nave of
St Matthew's Cathedral*

Mr. John (Jack) Hamilton receives the French Legion of Honour



*Jack Hamilton after receiving the
French Legion of Honour
Photos by Gerry Woodman*



Paul Martin, Jack Tennant and Jack Hamilton speak of old times

On 26th November 2014 several veterans of the Battle of Normandy attended a special ceremony at the Manitoba Government House. These deserving veterans of the Battle of Normandy were presented with the Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour. Mr. Jack Hamilton a former member of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and a museum supporter, received the award for his service during the Battle in 1944 he was left for dead after he was wounded during the beach landing. Mr. Hamilton survived his wounds and has the shrapnel to prove it. He continued to fight for the rest of the War and returned to home safely.

Ross Neale Room

On Friday the 28th November 2014 during the 26th Field Regt RCA Officers and NCOs Mess St. Barbara's Celebration and Dinner a longstanding 26 Fd Regt tradition, the museum west room was named in honour of the late CWO A.R. (Ross) Neale, CD. Don Berry, Museum Board President, gave a moving speech on the history of Mr. Neale and the Museum. Despite the first snow storm of the season, the dinner catered by the Double Happiness restaurant was well attended and enjoyed by all. Many members of Ross Neale's family attended the room naming.



*LCol Mel Neville CO
speaks about RSM
Neale and his
contributions*



*His Honour Justice
Brian Midwinter
conducts the toast
to St Barbara*



*Museum Board President
Don Berry Colonel
carries out the naming
of the Ross Neale Room*



*Plates and Plaque on the transom
above the door to the former
Museum West Room*

World War One Part Three Trench Warfare.

Symbol of the futility of war

Trench warfare has become a powerful symbol of the futility of war. The poignant image of young men going "over the top" into a maelstrom of rifle and machine gun fire leading to almost certain death which was typified by the first day of the Somme or the devastating slaughter in the mud of Passchendaele, or the attrition of the Battle of Verdun. Most people think of WW1 when trench warfare comes to mind but "Field Works" have been in use as long as there have been armies. The concept of digging a hole or trench for battlefield protection is not a new one; castle defenses during the Middle Ages regularly employed moats, which are simply circular trenches filled with water. During Roman times their Legions would entrench themselves at night in temporary trenches while on the move. In the early modern era trenches were used to block possible lines of advance. During the War of the Spanish Succession running for about ten miles from Stollhofen on the Rhine to the impenetrable woods on the hills east of Buhl. Trenches played a pivotal role in the manoeuvring that took place before the Battle of Blenheim (1704). The lines were captured by the French in 1707 and demolished. The French built twelve miles of trench at Weisseburg during the War of the Spanish Succession under the orders of Duke of Villars in 1706. These were to remain in existence for just over 100 years and were last manned during Napoleon's Hundred Days (1815). Trench fortifications were not restricted to European powers. Elaborate trench and bunker systems were developed by the Maori of New Zealand, who successfully employed them in the 1840s to withstand British cannon, muskets, and an experimental poison-gas mortar in the New Zealand Wars. Trench and bunker systems were employed more regularly in the mid 19th century during the American Civil War, the Boer War, and others in response to the development of superior rifle and artillery technology. The Boers were especially known for their trenches and individual holes that allowed them to kill many more soldiers than they received themselves. During the siege of Vicksburg (1863) General Grant had his engineering officers lay out the Union lines around the Confederate stronghold. The Union troops who built the earthworks were Pioneer Companies, supplied with axes and digging implements, began the work on the trenches and saps. Because there were too few of them. The pioneer companies hired former slaves liberated during the campaign to provide additional labor, the freedmen were paid \$10 a month. Additional details of infantrymen were assigned to work on the trenches. Working day and night the soldiers worked at digging narrow, zigzag approaches to the rebel works. Although the Union diggers were enthusiastic at the start of the siege, the novelty of sweaty digging soon wore off, and efficiency dropped. Forty-two days and forty-two nights the soldiers burrowed like gophers with a shovel in one hand and a musket in the other. There was nothing glamorous about trench life. World War 1 trenches were dirty, smelly and riddled with disease. The soldiers life in the trenches meant living in fear of diseases and the constant fear of enemy attack. Trench warfare WW1 style is something all participating countries vowed never to repeat and the facts make it easy to see why. Constructing trenches during WW1 was carried out differently by all the belligerents. The British and the French recruited manpower from non-

belligerent China to support the troops with manual labour. Their most important task was digging the trenches in WW1. There were 140,000 Chinese labourers that served on the Western Front over the course of the First World War (40,000 with the French and 100,000 with the British forces). They were known as the Chinese Labour Corps.



Men of the Chinese Labour Corps load sacks of oats onto a truck (12 August 1917) at Boulogne France while supervised by a British Officer August 1917 Photo Wikipedia



British Soldiers in the trenches at Ypres Belgium 1914 to 1918 in the Ypres Salient battlefields. which have been preserved and are still accessible to visitors Photo Wikipedia

The open space between two sets of opposing trenches became known as No Man's Land because no soldier wanted to traverse the distance for fear of attack. The climate in France and Belgium was quite wet, so No Man's Land soon became a mud bath. The mud was so thick that soldiers could disappear into it never to be seen again. There were millions of rats in WW 1 trenches. A pair of rodents could produce as many as 900 young a year in trench conditions so soldiers attempts to kill them were futile. Eighty thousand British Army soldiers suffered from shell shock over the course of the war. That's approximately two percent of the men who were called up for active service. World War One trench warfare was so intense that ten percent of all the soldiers who fought were killed. The KIA rate in World War Two was four and a half percent. That's more than double the percentage of fighting soldiers who were killed in the WW2.



French soldiers fire on the Germans from ditches during the First Battle of the Marne fought from 5–12 September 1914. Photo Wikipedia



American Civil War soldiers dead in a ditch. War had not changed in fifty years Photo galleryhip.com

Almost as soon as WW1 began, soldiers from both sides of the battle began digging ditches as protection. Little did they know that the holes in the ground would be where they would live, eat, sleep, fight and die together would get bigger and more complex and last for the duration of the war. The trenches became the battle ground of The Great War and became the final resting place for millions of young men, some as young

as seventeen years old. Most of the men who served in the trenches from 1914 until 1918, were not career soldiers, they were either volunteers who gave up their everyday jobs to serve their country in its time of need or as the war progressed conscription was introduced if your name was called then you had to enlist in the armed services. Most of the received only six weeks of basic training, the young men were sent to war really unprepared for the unimaginable horrors that lay ahead of them.



Men of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) Become acclimatized to the life in the trenches
Photo Wikipedia



More men of the BEF sit in a trench and wait

Photo WW1facts.net

The Western Front during World War 1 stretched from the North Sea at Belgium to the Swiss Frontier with France, over 240 miles long, fighting a war in the trenches would bring an end to speculation of a quick war that would be over by Christmas. Trench warfare meant a slow long drawn out war, a stalemate. Men would be shot down in their thousands as they tried to go over the top into the enemy trenches, most before they could even get 50 yards out of their own trenches. This made it almost impossible for either side to gain ground from the other. Holes in the ground were home to millions of soldiers throughout the war years and although many men died in battle just as many were killed by disease or infection brought on by the inhuman unsanitary conditions of life in the trenches.



The first use of gas was to release the gas and let the winds carry the gas across no man's land to the enemy's trenches
Photo Google.com



Later the process of delivery was by artillery guns allowing commanders a more flexible use of gas as an offensive weapon.
Photo Google.com

Gas attacks were the most feared weapon in World War 1. They were very dangerous weapons causing over one million casualties and about 100,000 deaths during World War 1, mostly during the beginning stages of the war. They were first used by the French to attack the Germans using a gas that contained xylyl bromide. Gas was a very scary weapon because it didn't kill instantly. It took days or weeks of suffering until it finally killed. The most well-known symptom was blindness. It also caused lung damage and breathing problems. The gas attacks had many advantages, but some disadvantages too. The biggest advantage was that it was

really hard to protect yourself from the gas attacks early on in the war and it was a huge element of surprise. The soldiers would dive into shell holes to protect themselves, but it would drop down into the shell holes and suffocate them because the gas is much heavier than air. Another advantage was that it could be used at any time in trenches even when there is no attack going on. The gas attacks forced enemies to put respirators on. Early on, the respirators would leak a lot and result in many deaths, but the respirators improved later on. Their protection methods were using cotton pads covered in a solution of bicarbonate of soda or cloths covered in urine. LCol R.P. Cromarty M.Sc., M.B., F.R.C.S a Sergeant at the time after serving with a Sanitary Section of the Army Medical Corps. During his time with the Sanitary Section he had been engaged finding new methods for fighting the deadly German gas, Sgt. Cromarty developed a respirator which was one of the first practical respirators.



The respirator developed
by Sgt Cormarty
Photo ancestry.ca



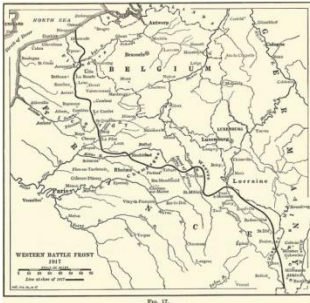
Various respirators used on the western front in WW1

Photo Wikipedia

After a poison gas attack the smell would linger for days, adding to the many pungent aroma's in the trenches. New recruits on their initial approach to the trenches would often be overcome by the putrid stench that hit them. Often it would be too much for some men so that they were physically sick even before they reached the Front Line. Rotting flesh from bodies in shallow graves, overflowing cesspits full of feces and urine, creosote and Chlorine used to cover up the cesspits and to try and stave off infections or disease. Adding to the smell there were also millions of sandbags rotting away through dampness from the rain, stagnant mud, cigarette smoke and even the smell of the men already in the trenches who hadn't managed to have a decent wash in weeks. The smell of battle also filled the air stinging the nostrils of new recruits. Acrid cordite smells from the everlasting heavy shell fire, the lingering odour of poison gasses and of course the gunpowder smell from the soldiers firearms. The soldiers never really got used to the smell but became accustomed to living with it, some soldiers even claimed that the smell never left them even years after the war was over. Rats thrived in the trenches almost everywhere you looked rats would be running around in their thousands, eating human remains, dead insects and anything else that would fit in their mouths. The rats were beyond human control because they were in their ideal breeding ground and for every 10 rats killed another 100 would be born. Some of the rats were so well fed that they grew to almost the same size as a domestic cat. It was a widespread belief amongst the soldiers in the trenches that the rats knew in advance when the enemy was going to attack with a heavy bombardment of shells because the rats always seemed to disappear minutes before an enemy attack. Lice were ever present in the trenches and caused a lot of problems for the men. Although a lot of the men shaved off every bit of hair from their heads and bodies the lice lived in their clothes and fed on their human blood. Even when their clothes were washed and deloused some eggs still survived in the seams of the soldiers uniforms and would re-infect them.

Lice were carriers of Trench fever, a particularly painful disease that began suddenly with severe pain followed by high fever which took up to 12 weeks to recover from. It wasn't discovered until 1918 that the lice were the cause of trench fever.

The black line on the map shows where the trenches stretched from The North Sea to the Swiss border.



Map Of The Western Front World War One

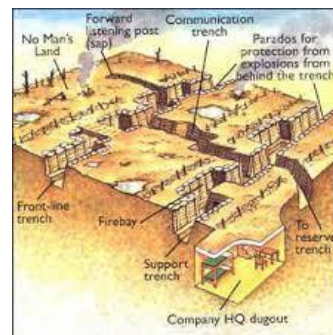
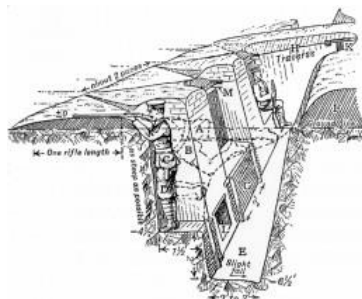
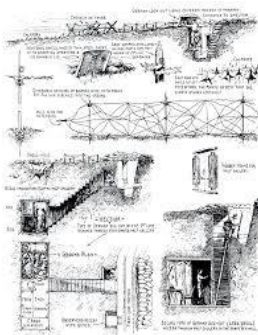
Photo wikimedia



The most highly mapped piece of ground on the planet

Photo librarymcmaster.ca

Millions of frogs were found in water holes made by shell fire and in the bases of the trenches. Slugs and horned beetles were lined the walls of the trench. With so much rotting flesh around flies and maggots were a constant problem with the soldiers, flies and maggots were everywhere and anywhere. Most soldiers wrapped scarves or towels around their mouths to avoid swallowing them. The flies were responsible for the spread of many infections and diseases in the trenches. The Trenches were always waterlogged which meant that the soldiers living in them always had wet feet, this caused a major problem called trench foot especially if it was left untreated. Trench Foot is a fungal infection of the feet which, if not treated could get easily infected and turn gangrenous which in most cases would lead to amputation of part of the foot or even the whole foot. Duck boards were quickly introduced into the trenches above the common waterline as a prevention in 1915. Cases of trench foot saw a rapid decline although there were still a few sufferers throughout the duration of the war.



A typical trenches used during WW1 These diagrams do not really show the difficulties soldiers faced everyday Photos wikimedia

In the next issue of the Newsletter Part Four of World War I

“Spring 1915 The Lusitania is Sunk and the aftermath.”

Badges of the Canadian Army past and present

On the page of this and following editions of the 26XII Newsletter there will be pictures of the badges of Canadian Army Units past and present. Some examples are below.



CWAC
Photo Wikipedia
Photo by CAF



The Yukon
Regiment Photo by
shoulder to shoulder



Canadian Armed Forces
Cadet Instructor Cadre
Photo by eBay



Royal Canadian Postal Corps
Photo by
postal badges.com

Identify the Artefact



Answer to last Identify the Artefact
M-109 Tail light Photo SDI



Identify the Artefact:
For answer see next issue of
The 26XII Newsletter

Name that Ribbon

In this section different ribbons will be shown. The names of the ribbon and its associated medal will be published in the next issue of the newsletter. Note these ribbons will be world-wide.



Ribbon 1



Ribbon 2



Ribbon 3



Ribbon 4



Ribbon 5

Answers to last issue ribbons



Ribbon 1

USA

Afghanistan

Campaign Medal



Ribbon 2

British 1914 Star

With 5 AUG 22/23 NOV

Silver Rosette



Ribbon 3

French

Croix de Guerre

WW1



Ribbon 4

Bulgarian

War Medal

WW1



Ribbon 5

French

Sudan Medal

1896

Museum Coming Attractions and events

09 December 2014

Museum Christmas Luncheon for the full time staff of 26 Fd Regt RCA.

10 December 2015 to 06 January 2015 Museum is closed for Christmas and New Year's.



**Catch a bus,
Drive a car,
Ride your bike or walk.**

The Museum is open every Tuesday from 9:00 to 11:30 am and 1:00 to 4:00 pm. For tours at other times call the Curator Edd. Mc Arthur at 204 726-3498.



26XII Museum Kit Shop



26XII Museum Kit Shop Photo SDI



26XII Museum Hat \$20 Photo SDI

26 Field Regiment RCA/ XII Manitoba Dragoons Museum Kit Shop

Items for sale:

Books;

History of the Regiment	(hard cover \$25.00)
History of the Regiment	(soft cover \$25.00)
Ubique 50 th Anniversary	(soft cover \$5.00)
DVD, Life in the Regiment/XII Scrapbooks	(\$25.00)
Dragoon Stamps	(\$1.25 each or \$50.00 a sheet)
Key chains each	(\$3.00)
Stickers each	(\$2.00)
Hats each	(\$20.00)

Thanks to our Donors September to November 2014,

Donations of Artefacts

Mr. Russell Hawkins
Col (ret'd) Don Berry
Mrs. Ruth Davies
Mrs. Lesley Jackson
Mr. Jack Snow
Mr. Dale Murray
Dennis & Missy Drummond
Mrs. Jean Brown

Monetary Donations

Barbara Lloyd & Diane Bode
Recognition of Father
George St. Cyr's 90th birthday
Edith R. Munroe
LCol David Dalal
CAVUNP Sapper Christopher
HOLOPINA CHAPTER
26th Field Artillery Association
Inc. The Senate

Donations of Services

Mr. B. Hillman web services and design;
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Hall for the Museum pot luck supper and;
Thank you to our Commercial Supporters
Rapid City Memorials.

NOTE: due to the Regimental Orderly Room being closed for Christmas Leave from 9 December 2014 to 6 January 2015, any monetary donation received will be issued an Income Tax Receipt for 2015.

For tax deductible charitable donation please make your cheques payable to:

Friends of 26 Field Artillery/XII Manitoba Dragoons Military Museum INC.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Museum is located on the South West corner of 11th Street and Victoria Avenue.

26 Field Regiment RCA/XII Manitoba Dragoons Museum Board and Officers

President, Colonel (Ret'd) Don Berry, CD;
Vice President, Hon Col Rick Felstead, CStJ, CD
Curator, Captain (Ret'd) E.L. Mc Arthur. CD
Secretary Gord Sim, CD

Be sure to check us out on the web at:

www.26fdregmuseum.com or

www.12mbdragons.com

Webmaster Bill Hillman

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Vice President Jacquie Thompson

Secretary Arlene Haggerty

Treasurer Penny LaRocque

For Information on the Museum and tours, contact Curator.

This Newsletter is published by SDI under the authority of the Commanding Officer of 26 Fd Regt RCA and The Board of 26 Field Regiment RCA /XII MB Dragoons Museum. Please forward any inquiries to 26fdregCurator@wcgwave.ca.

My thanks to all the Museum Volunteers for their valuable assistance in putting the Newsletter together.

Note: all pictures are by SDI unless otherwise indicated.

Editor.

