



Sabretache

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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April 2013

27th Canadian Infantry Brigade The Canadian Army's First NATO Commitment

The early 1950s saw a level of intensity The Canadian Army had never seen outside of a major war. The Canadian Army had 3 major roles in the early 1950s, the defense of Canada, the Korean War, and supporting the newly created North Atlantic Treaty Organization. With The Canadian Army Special Force committed to the Korean War, the Regular Army to the defense of Canada there were no readily available troops to commit to the defense of Western Europe. To meet this NATO commitment, a new brigade -- 27 Canadian Infantry Brigade, was announced in the House of Commons on 4 May 51 and the Canadian Army called upon the Militia to man it.

Operation "PANDA" required 15 militia regiments to supply one company each to create 3 infantry battalions. The enlistment period was 1 year for married men and 2 years for single men. The companies were grouped in accordance to their traditional roles. The 1st Canadian Rifle Battalion consisted of companies of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Victoria Rifles of Canada, The Royal Winnipeg Rifles, The Regina Rifles and The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment). The 1st Canadian Highland Battalion came from The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, The North Nova Scotia Highlanders, 48th Highlanders of Canada, The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada and The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's). The 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion, represented line infantry units; The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, The Carleton and York Regiment, The Algonquin Regiment, and The Loyal Edmonton Regiment. The regimental uniforms would remain, only the addition of a distinctive battalion/ brigade formation patch would identify which battalion a soldier belonged to. Thirty pipe bands, pipe, bugle, or brass, were also provided to each of the battalions. Other units in the Brigade; artillery, engineers, and service support were recruited in the same fashion. The only Regular Force unit was "C" Squadron, Royal Canadian Dragoons. This was, and still is, the largest overseas deployment



Canadian Scottish—Royal Scots 27 CIB

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The
CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
is a non-profit registered society
which fosters the study of the
military and the police, and the heritage of
Canada, the British Empire, and the world
as well as the preservation of military
artifacts and records.

The CMHS meets once every calendar month
at:

Petty Officers' Mess
HMCS Tecumseh
1820 - 24th Street SW
Calgary AB T2T 0G6

All are welcome to attend

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Notice of Next Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on

Tuesday, April 16th, 2013
19:00 (7:00 pm)

At the Petty Officers' Mess, HMCS Tecumseh.

Members are reminded that an offering of foodstuffs for the Legion Food Bank is considered your unofficial entrance fee to our regular scheduled meetings.

The unofficial agenda of this meeting will be:

- Introduction of guests, Minutes of last meeting
- Correspondence, Membership report
- Treasurer's report, Old business / New business
- Break. Show and Tell

The President, David Soltess, would like to invite everyone to remain after the meeting for an informal time of fellowship.

Operation Panda—The Canadian Army's First NATO Commitment



Men of 55 Tpt Coy Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (R.C.A.S.C.) at Work in Germany

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Minutes of the last meeting

CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of Meeting held on March 19th, 2013

Petty Officers Mess: HMCS Tecumseh

Meeting called to order by President David S. at 7:05 pm.
20 members present and no guests.

Minutes of last meeting approved. Motion by Mike C. and seconded by Barry E. to accept. Approved

Treasures Report given by Esteemed Guardian of the Treasury, Brian H.

-Moved to accept by Brian H. Seconded by Bob McP. Approved by all.

Membership Report. 47 total

Correspondence: none

OLD BUSINESS:

Pres. David S.—another reminder that the web page “www.cmhs.ca” needs articles.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mike C— New book out “Fuss & Fashion” by Clive Law. \$69.00 ambitious effort by author covering headdress of the Canadian Military.

Mike C—First 40 “Arctic Star” issued. Commemorating convoys in WW2 to northern Russia

David G.— Story from UK paper showing P.M. giving out awards.

Al D.—Story about Goering's Brother who was not a Nazi and helped Jewish People leave Germany during the thirties.

Merv J.— Story about Chilliwack Gun Show. Veterans sold “T” shirts to raise money for a lawsuit against Federal Gov't for changing their veterans benefits.

Auction—Books auctioned off by the noisy Bob McP. Books donated by David S.

BREAK

Draw conducted by ticketmiester Neil P. Many joyous winners.

SHOW & TELL:

Floyd S.—story on PPCLI relatives. Gun show find, cigarette case 1953 Korea

David G.—Grandfathers puttees.

David S.—Seaforth Highlanders sporran pipers badge 1 & 2. Discussion on various versions and when they were used.

Number of lugs used between Scully and British badges.

Al D.—Updates on plans for new armouries, brochure sent out by Gov't showing new possible buildings at HMCS Tecumseh.

Don S.—Sword stick cane inscribed with various sayings. Made by Howe Co. 1930's. Book of flats and pictures.

Allan McK.—Describes Country Club Party. Talked to Fred McCall's relatives. Received book “Fred McCall's History” Stories of German planes he shot down..

Dave L.— Letter from soldier WW1, written on chaplains letterhead and not censored.

Dave L.—Attended Queens Jubilee awards presentation. Pictures of member Bob McP. Receiving awards. and medals.

Bob McP.— very rare military script from WW2, from France, Germany and Italy

Mike C.—Puttees, Medal from Boer war with 6 bars. J. McDonnell Q Battery Royal Horse Artillery.

Gary S.—Trip to Hawaii and history of Capt. Cook and his achievements. Tours taken of Pearl harbour.

Darrell K—stories.

President David S. mentions that Club members should come up with ideas' for our group to display items.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm. Motion by Mike C seconded by Barry E.



Pictures and this months Newsletter story was provided by Member Bruce G.

of the Militia in peacetime. The appointment of Brigadier Geoffrey Walsh, C.B.E., D.S.O., C.D., as Commander 27th Canadian Infantry Brigade Group was announced on 25 May 51. 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion was commanded by Lt-Col J.K. Mahoney, V.C.; (His V.C. was awarded for his action as a company commander with The Westminster Regiment at the Melfa River, Italy, 1944).

The Brigade arrived in Rotterdam, 21 November 1951, and moved to British barracks in Hannover, in a devastated Germany still recovering from the Second World War. To make NATO work, good relations had to be established with the German people, but almost all the senior members of the Brigade had wartime service, and the feelings ran deep. On exercise, officers had to be constantly reminded to stop referring to the "enemy" as "Krauts". But the professionalism of the Canadians won over the Germans, and great relations were established between the Canadian Army and the Germans for the next 4 decades. None the less the brigade developed a "train hard-play hard" attitude that did not always sit well with the press in Canada.

27 CIB was replaced by the all regular 1 Canadian Infantry Brigade Group in 1953, continuing a presence in Germany that would last 42 years and see over 100,000 Canadian soldiers serve in Germany. 27 CIB set the standard on which NATO would judge the Canadian contribution, and that Canada could stand side by side with her allies.



Twenty-seven Brigade Troops Outside Globe Theatre in Hannover



Twenty-seven Brigade Troops Under Kropcke Clock in Hannover

Epilogue:
On the 16th

of October 1955 the 3 rifle battalions of 27 CIB were redesignated First Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Third Battalion, The Canadian Guards and First Battalion, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada. These units, as part of the regular army, would perform yeoman service in Germany, as part on Canada's NATO commitment, in the coming decades.

Sources:

Report No 51 Historical Section (G.S.) Army HQ, 6 May 52

War Without Battles: Canada's NATO Brigade in Germany, Sean M Maloney (Author)