

Class of 65 Newsletter

Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

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March/Mars 2019

Disclaimer: This Newsletter is produced for members of the RMC Class of 1965 and is based primarily on inputs from members of the Class of 65. It is not an official publication of the Royal Military College nor does it purport to represent the views or opinions of all members of the Class. Unfortunately, the Editorial staff lacks the linguistic skills to produce a bilingual version. Items are published in the official language in which they are received.

Editor's Corner/Coin du rédacteur

Aside from being the 118th edition of this rag, it is also the 1st International Edition coming to you from Ponce Inlet, Florida. More on that later. In addition, this edition includes the annual report on the so-called "Rump Lunch" from the Florida Gulf Coast Snow Bird Classmates; the reprint of an e-veritas article on the 2019 Navy Mess Dinner at RMC; and, a somewhat tongue in-cheek proposal for a new medical care system by Gord (Navy) Forbes.

But first, some sad news. In Edition 117, we reported that **6700 Bob Walker** was very ill. Sadly, he has subsequently passed away. We join all classmates in extending our condolences to Colleen and Kimothy on their loss. Bob was a fine gentleman and a good friend. He will be missed.

Mike Houghton sent the following message, Very sad news re: Bob Walker. Did not know him well but over the past several months, enjoyed several Kingston Branch lunches with both Bob and Steve Arnold. I was not aware that he was ill and this explains why I have not seen him more recently. I, too, wish his family well over the next difficult times they will spend together.

Letter

I was pleased to receive the following message from CMR Classmate, **6367 Peter Thackray**, who had been "lost" to the system:

I enjoy reading about classmates from my one year at CMR in 60-61.

On Nov 11 this year some of our classmates got together in Halifax to remember some of our Navy flight school classmates who died in Downsview in 1968.

Derek Carrier and Tony Halladay were in attendance.

Welcome back Peter.



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2019 Rump Lunch by Hugh Spence

The 2019 Florida Class of 65 rump lunch was pretty skimpy this year, minus about 8-10 regular attendees who were visiting grandchildren or had decided to boycott the USA, but it was a great pleasure at Keith's rented small villa in Naples, complete with pool. We almost called up the local Subaru dealer for a promo shoot because amazingly, four of us showed up with almost identical Outbacks, (well, Waine's is bright blue,) the 5th car in the group being *hemm hemm*, Amby's electric Tesla. (Ask him about travelling long distance with that!)



(l-r) Keith Ambachtsheer (with Ibiza,) Chris Spence, Hugh Spence, Virginia Atkin, Sandy Holman, Mike Houghton, Nancy Berman, Nellie McQuinn, Waine McQuinn.

Photo by Fras Holman



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Naval Mess Dinner Tradition Alive & Well- Thanks to Foundation Donors by Jennifer Jordan, RMC Foundation Funding Coordinator

On Wednesday 6 March 2019, the Naval Cadets of the Class of 2019 will gather at the Senior Staff Mess to participate in the annual navy mess dinner. The dinner offers the perfect chance for the Fourth Year Cadets to get some exposure to what their future naval careers hold and also serves as an introduction to a “true” naval mess dinner. There will be several distinguished guests representing the different naval trades that will impart a great deal of wisdom (and more than a few sea stories) to the Cadets.

In addition to the formal mess dinner there is a presentation of three Naval Swords supported by three donors to the RMC Foundation. The swords are ““awarded to the best overall naval operations cadet based on third year academic marks and overall performance in naval training during summer training periods.” **H6604 Jim Carruthers (Class of 1965)** provides funding for both the Naval Operations, and the Naval Engineering Swords and, in addition, initiated the tradition in 2011. The Sea Logistics Sword is funded by donations provided by **12141 Bryn Weadon (Class of 1979)**, and **15946 Jill Carleton (Class of 1987)**.

A New Model For Health Care By 6533 Gord Forbes

As every province seems to be wrestling with how to provide adequate health care within their provincial budgets, it got me thinking about possible solutions. Doug Ford, the Premier of Ontario wants to revamp the whole health care system to make it more efficient.

In thinking about it, I remembered back to some of the experiences I had with health care and its providers.

The first time I remember was at RMC when I hurt my ankle doing gymnastics training early one morning. One of the PhysEd staff helped me over to the college MIR where I was greeted (?) by two medical corps corporals. “The doctor’s not here yet, come back later.” I hobbled to my cabin, got dressed and went to class out in the old civil engineering lab. By mid-morning I was in terrible pain and one of the professors saw it and offered to drive me back to the MIR. “The doctor’s left for the day. Come back tomorrow. Oh, and here are a couple of aspirins,” the helpful staff told me. Next morning, I duly reported to the MIR and this time I actually saw a doctor. “It might be broken. Walk out to the van and go to the hospital for X-rays.” The X-rays showed there was no break, but there was a possibility of ligament damage. “Go to the other side of the hospital and see the duty doctor there.” Off I hobbled. There I got in a line-up of about a dozen Guardsmen



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Health Care (continued)

who had just arrived from Picton barracks. And, of course I had to stand and wait my turn. “You probably have a stretched or torn ligament. After lunch, go the third-floor plaster room and get a cast on it.” There was the answer and it had all been accomplished in a mere 30 hours.

For another lesson, I turn to another experience in college, this time in fourth year. I was playing intramural football when I was hit hard in the head and briefly passed out. Again, I was taken to the base hospital and put to bed under observation. I was told not to get up until the doctor saw me the following morning. Nonetheless, at 0600 the following day I was awakened. I found the young private in the bed next to me, who had a cast on one leg from toe to hip, up and hobbling around his bed trying to make it. He told me I had to do the same. I declined and was only allowed to get up later after the doctor’s rounds, but I was not released before I too had to strip and make my own bed.

So here were some clear lessons from the military medical system on how to streamline medical care. But there were other experiences along the way that pointed to other means for improvement.

The military medical system is nothing if not egalitarian, even in other countries. Take the example when I was on exchange with the US Navy stationed in Newport, Rhode Island. The senior afloat admiral in Newport was Rear-Admiral Sam Gravely, the first African-American admiral in the US Navy. One Sunday morning, Sam did not feel very well so he took himself to sick call at the naval hospital. He was in civilian clothes. He arrived at the hospital and signed himself in, “RADM S. L. Gravely” and took a seat in the hallway awaiting his turn. A short time later, the orderly came out, looked at his sign-in sheet, looked at Sam and said, “Who is this? Radioman Gravely?” No deference to rank here.

I had another lesson on system efficiency when I was in NDHQ some years later. I had been suffering with a sore back for some time; a condition which seemed to be really bad when I stood still. I went to sick bay and had it looked at. Without bothering with an X-ray or any other type of diagnostics, the doctor declared that I was a malingerer who only wanted to get out of parades. Now that was the way to deal with patients! No bullshit, just a straightforward dismissal of my problem (it was finally diagnosed and dealt with when I was a civilian). Come to think of it, a couple of other lingering problems finally got fixed after I took off my uniform. But let’s not let that detract us from our main premise.

Another idea that I had derived from a supposed shipbuilding technique known as the Olympic method. In this method all the shipyard maties line up at the gate every morning with their piece of pipe or plate. When the gates open, the workers run to building site. The first one to get there gets to install the straight run of pipe or easiest bit of plating while the slower ones must fit their pieces around that. Soooo . . . why not apply this to the medical system. No need for receptionists making appointments days or weeks ahead. Just have prospective patients line up at the door each morning and when the doors are opened, the fastest ones get to the front of the line for the next available doctor.



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Health Care (concluded)

So, there is the model for revamping our troubled medical care system. A couple of retired medical assistant corporals and a few doctors. The Olympic method of patient prioritization and doctors who will just tell you that you are malingering with your complaints of a sore back or feet. Patients who must make their own beds instead of overpaid cleaning personnel. Fast, timely and cheap (sorry . . . efficient). Who could ask for more? At last affordable health care for all Canadians. After all, you wouldn't have expected the Canadian Forces to overspend on health care would you?

(Ed Note—I'll have a bit to add on health care in the next article)

On Becoming Snowbirds

By 6364 Mike Braham

Last year, my wife Janet and I prevailed on several friends to visit the Gulf Coast of Florida for the last week of February and the first week in March—a most welcome break from the Ottawa winter. This experience convinced Janet that it was time to give up her lifetime love of skiing and to take advantage of the warmer weather of Florida. I must confess that I was less enthusiastic with the idea, but being the dutiful husband that I am, got involved in the planning for a two month southern sojourn.

Thinking that the proximity to the Atlantic might provide some relief from the heat experienced on the Gulf Coast last year we focussed our attention on the Atlantic Coast of Florida. After a great deal of research, including frequent rejections, we were finally able to settle on a condominium in Ponce Inlet, a small coastal community just south of Daytona Beach.

We left Ottawa on 28 January, a day ahead of a major forecast storm and spent almost three days on a fairly uneventful drive. The only exception was when I blindly followed the GPS instructions to take a short cut around Baltimore and Washington, DC. We managed to catch the morning rush hour traffic that was a nightmare of six lanes either travelling bumper to bumper at 60 mph or crawling along for miles at 6mph.

We arrived a day earlier than our lease commencement, but our landlord (who has turned out to be a real prince) let us in without any extra charge. The condo turned out to be a wonderful surprise—indoor parking, three bedrooms, beautifully furnished and equipped with all the latest appliances and electronic devices. Initially, the latter posed some problems to this technically backward tenant!

The condo is in a gated community, with a complete ensemble of recreational activities—a small par 3 golf course; at least 3 swimming pools (there may be others we haven't discovered yet), tennis courts, and it's own beach house on what is probably the longest beach in the world.

There are a host of good restaurants in the area, although I think I am starting to grow fins with all the seafood we have eaten. There are golf courses aplenty and we have been playing 2 or 3 times a week.



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On Becoming Snowbirds (Continued)

There is also a wide variety of interesting attractions within easy driving distance—the Daytona International Speedway; the historic old city of St Augustine; the Kennedy Space Centre; Blue Springs State Park where one can see large collections of manatees and alligators in the wild; and, the Daytona Boardwalk to name but a few. We are now working our way through all of these.

But not all is good! Less than a week here, I severed the Achilles tendon in my right heel while playing tennis. This led to my experience with the American Health system, a somewhat different tale from that told by Gord Forbes in the previous article.

First of all I took myself to a walk-in clinic where, to my amazement, I was the only patient, seen almost immediately, diagnosed and given a referral to a local hospital for an ultra sound. The hospital was huge and ultra modern and parking was FREE. Here I spent about half an hour getting registered in emergency before being sent to Imaging for the ultrasound. Half an hour later we were heading home. On the way, I stopped and picked up an orthopaedic boot from a pharmacy. My next step was to get an appointment with an orthopaedic surgeon to get a better idea of the way ahead, The doctor advised immediate surgery and told me he could do it the next day! However, when I learned that I would be immobilised for about 8 weeks after the surgery I decided to put it off until I got home and to hobble around with my boot, which actually seems to be helping my golf game! The wisdom of my decision remains to be seen.

Of course, the speed of my various treatments was facilitated by money that was paid up front—something that must be next to impossible for the millions of Americans without insurance or medicare,

Bottom line is that my initial resistance to this sojourn was misplaced and we are thoroughly enjoying ourselves and have already agreed with the landlord to return next year.

I've added a selection of photos of the area, below and on the next page.



Condo Towers



One of the Pools



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On Becoming Snowbirds (Concluded)



Fun Boat



Ponce Inlet Lighthouse



Booted on the Boardwalk



Endless Beach



Sunset on the Intra Coastal Waterway



Castillo de San Marcos, St Augustine



Flagler University, St Augustine



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Closing Notes

So that's it from the Sunshine State, with apologies and sympathy to those of you have stayed home and braved what seems to have been a record Canadian winter. Although I didn't mention it in my article, my original resistance was based on my personal abhorrence of the current administration in the United States that, among other things, has distanced itself from traditional allies, while cosyng up to the world's principal tyrants. After setting aside those principles in favour of personal comfort, I am surprised and concerned with the fervent support that the majority of seemingly intelligent people that we have met down here holds for the administration! Unfortunately, I am not convinced that salvation is coming in 2020.