

Class of 65 Newsletter

Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

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March/mars 2022

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

Hello again from Florida as Janet and I find ourselves half way through our retreat from the Ottawa winter. Things have changed quite dramatically since publication of the last edition—the trucker protest/insurrection has come to a peaceful conclusion and apparently moved to Washington, DC. It will be interesting to see how it is handled there. Russia has invaded Ukraine and we are once again confronted with a resurgent “Soviet Union” and the potential for nuclear war as NATO is faced with the dilemma on non-intervention as friendly Ukraine is battered into submission. On a more positive note, there is growing optimism that we are starting to emerge from the Covid pandemic and life is nervously returning to normal.

A number of you had some comments associated with the last issue and they are reprinted here with our thanks for taking the time to offer an opinion which is always welcomed.

6643 Jim Kempling has proved a request for some Air Force and Naval experience for a UVic study project. Thanks to the dedicated sleuthing of **6345 Georges Wilson**, we have managed to re-establish contact with **6709 Lynn Zelmer** who has provided an update. **6533 Gord Forbes** has once again provided one of his interesting and thought provoking blogs.

Two of our number, Honourary class member **H24263 John Cowan** and Class of 65 Professor in Leadership **Christian Leuprecht** have both produced stimulating articles on topics of contemporary interest that are included for your enjoyment and comment.

Finally, it is our sad duty to once more note the passing of a classmate.

I hope that what follows will stimulate interest, further discussion and the urge to put pen to paper.



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6649 Peter Learmonth
(d. 19 February 2022)



We have been informed by the RMC Foundation that they were notified by 16877 Peter Learmonth Jr., that his father **6649 Maj (Ret'd) Peter Learmonth** passed away on Saturday, 19 February 2022.

Peter was predeceased by his wife Georgina in February 2015 and leaves two children: Peter and Sarah, and four grand children.

The Class of 65 mourns the loss of a fine colleague and offers its deepest sympathies to his family.

Update: 6709 Lynn Zelmer

6709 Lynn Zelmer has provided the following note and update from his home in Australia:

At the moment we're experiencing summer in all of its heat and humidity (36-40 degrees) with only occasional showers. 500-1000km to the south of us however have had torrential rainstorms and record-breaking flooding. Roads and rail lines have been cut so supplies haven't been coming through from the capital city distribution centres, thus bare shelves in all the supermarkets.

Covid seems to have peaked for the moment and we're starting to ramp up for the winter flu season. There's always something.

Update: Lynn Zelmer post-Royal Roads

My eyesight aimed me at Air Force technical but I barely completed my first year at Royal Roads. Recognising that I was inadequately prepared to continue with more advanced maths and physics, etc., I withdrew and obtained a BEd degree at what later became UofC. After teaching for several years in Calgary with a year out in Wisconsin working on a Masters degree in AudioVisual Education I moved to Edmonton and employment with UofA Extension.

Edmonton also brought marriage, a daughter, involvement in a coop housing project (did I say that I had been teaching building construction?) and employment everywhere from Western Canada to the High Arctic, Asia and Africa. Although no longer directly employed by university I remained a functioning academic with a number of books and journal publications and other achievements.

Computers became a big part of our life in the 1980s and a major part of my employment in Canada between overseas assignments. Eventually my Nurse Educator/University Administrator wife banged her head on a "glass ceiling" and took a side-step to develop new Nursing/Health Science degree programs in a



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Zelmer (Continued)

regional Australian university that was evolving its way out of its technical college origins.

This move also brought me back into formal academia, a PhD and 60-80 hour work weeks. Retirement came after a decade of teaching end-user computing, with much of that time also spent as an elected union official. Since retirement I've completed development assistance assignments in nearby Pacific Island nations, managed several web sites and newsletters, continued to regularly write/publish/exhibit as well as teach tai chi.

So for most of life I've been a development educator with an emphasis at various times in photography; film, television and appropriate media production; games development and computer basics. I've now been a tai chi instructor for over 20 years, shifting to zoom delivery and then outdoor classes when indoor venues became off limit due to Covid. Teaching tai chi has been a two way activity, requiring me to regularly exercise as well as providing emotional support.

Model building has been a periodic thread in my personal life. Modelling sugar cane railways became a focus after coming to Australia and resulted in the development and maintenance of an online resource site with over 10,000 photos and plans, etc. I've also turned my A/V and computer skills towards printmaking, both promotional and more artistic.

Working in education and healthcare, both in developing areas of Canada and overseas, brought an appreciation of life and Canada's bounty that could never have been achieved as a tourist (or member of the military). Australia is similarly burdened with a level of abundance (and other First World problems) that can easily blind one to the realities of much of the world.

We looked seriously at returning to Canada at retirement but have remained in Central Queensland with my wife in residential aged care due to mobility and neurological issues. I spend some time with her every day, sometimes just nearby as she dozes and other times pushing her wheelchair along the nearby streets (in the tropical sunshine). I have some health issues of my own but they are minor by comparison and seemingly under control.

Our daughter remained based in Canada. She worked for a time in Denmark and is now back again in Ottawa. Covid keeps us apart except for email and telephone, and we're looking forward to a return to some sort of normality.

I'm grateful to Georges Wilson for tracking me down in 2015 and I've read many of the Class of 1965 Newsletters since with interest, if not always understanding. It's taken me some time to contribute to the Newsletter but our world experiences have been so different that I've not been sure what to write. Hopefully the following images can bridge some of that gap.



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Zelmer (Concluded)



'Incarcerated', is a result of my frustration with the limitations imposed by Covid-19 and related events. "High walls and razor wire are not required to imprison an individual, or a society... we do it to ourselves, our families and our neighbours as we perform our civic duty."



House of Cards assemblage for the 2019 Off The Wall exhibition. Eighteen-plus views, chosen randomly from 80 digital images taken around Rockhampton, make up each of five unique works with Capricornia Printmakers colleague Peta Lloyd's handprinted interior images on the reverse side. Cards can be rearranged in any number of patterns.



Two of my digital posters displayed at the Archer Park Rail Museum, Rockhampton. The left hand poster is an example of my large promotional posters, the other is more directly educational. Printed on vinyl the colours have not faded, even though they do get some direct tropical sun.



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Articles of Interest

The following are links to articles of interest by colleagues associated with the Class of 65. The first is by Honourary Class member **H24263 John Cowan** and is one of a series of articles that he provides to the Ottawa Life Magazine. This one is entitled, “*Anti-Elitism Ain’t What It Used to Be*” and can be found at https://www.ottawalife.com/article/anti-elitism-aint-what-it-used-to-be?set_lang=en . Comments are solicited.

The second article of interest is by the Class Professor in Leadership, Christian Leuprecht and taken from the National Post and entitled “*Canada enables Russia by opposing pipelines and protecting money launderers*”. It can be opened at <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/christian-leuprecht-canada-enables-russia-by-opposing-pipelines-and-protecting-money-launderers> . Once again, comments will be welcomed.

Request for Input

The following has been received from **6643 Jim Kempling**: *I have been in touch with a group at the University of Victoria School of Public Admin. They are conducting a study about future defence policy in the arctic in the light of likely global warming and significant icecap loss, opening of NW Passage etc. They are keen to interview retired senior officers who might have some thoughts on the subject. Naturally I thought of the class of 65. I pretty well have the army side covered but am desperate for help with Navy and Airforce views to help keep the old soldiers in line. Could we send out an all points help request with my contact info.*

If you are interested in participating, please contact Jim directly.

Letters

The following letters have been received since the last edition:

6396 Rod MacKinnon: You asked for Class Members views on the so called Truckers Protest.

As I understand it, there was only a very small percentage of the Canadian Trucking Industry who supported or agreed with this protest, or its initially described rasion d’etre.

There were, and still are, a lot of right wing nut bars and extremists who joined in the protest because it suited their egos, or aligned with their limited knowledge of the problems, sourced mostly from Social Media.

That said, I am extremely disappointed in the response, and/or total lack thereof, from our political leaders and those authorities responsible for our safety and wellbeing. We Canadians have become enured to law-breakers , sic “protesters”, cloaking themselves in social causes in order to freely disrupt our daily lives.

However this time , rather than a cause stemming from left wing sentiments, we are getting one coming from the other end of the political spectrum, and our cancel culture leaders and mainstream media are aghast that such a thing could happen in Woke Canada. The result being that no one had the slightest idea how to deal with, or respond effectively to, the crisis. Slowly however, the views and sentiments of the “Silent Majority” have seeped into the mix, and the police authorities are beginning to formulate and take effective action



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Letters (continued)

against the wing nuts who continue to occupy our nation's capitol and key border routes vital to our trade and commerce. It is safe to say this situation will not end well, and could almost be described as "too little, too late". I hope and trust that we have all learned a lesson in preparedness and can respond appropriately to the next demonstration of popular dissent, from the left or the right.

6173 Jack Flannagan: Once again, thank you for keeping up this series of class newsletters. I look forward to each issue.

You asked about views on the Freedom Convoy, so here's mine:

I'm of two minds over this event. Firstly the right to assemble peacefully and try to talk to our employees, the government, should not be halted or impaired by people like the mayor of Ottawa, siccing his police force on people carrying fuel cans. Since when did it become illegal to buy diesel fuel? The other side of the coin is, of course, the population of Ottawa, who didn't ask for this disruption and probably don't agree with the premise, in the main.

The primary obstacle to resolving this issue in any meaningful way is, of course, the Prime Minister. How can we have any respect for this cowardly politician, running off to Harrington Lake at the first sign of unrest? Then he throws diesel fuel on the flames when he tells us that he does approve of some protests, giving as a good example BLM (colloquially referred to as Burn Loot and Murder). How can BLM be evaluated as worthy of his approval as they attempt to burn down their country, yet Canadians who don't approve of his policies and say so out loud are racists, misogynists, and people with 'unacceptable views'. Where the Hell does he get off telling Canadians who disagree with him that their interpretation of events is unacceptable. What does that even mean?

If our employees, the government, would simply attempt to talk to the protestors, to accept that it is legal and appropriate to disagree with the government and that some of their ideas may well be worth considering, then this confrontation could be resolved. Insulting and demonizing people who disagree with you does not usually achieve anything meaningful. And threatening to set the Army on those who disagree with you is not dangerous to our democracy?

Finally, how did truckers, who for the last two years have been heroes, front line workers risking life and limb, keeping us fed and our economy from collapsing, suddenly become violent, racist, misogynistic Nazis? Any resemblance between Ottawa and reality is purely coincidental.

6611 Doug Cope: Thanks for the latest addition. All I can say about Florida is be careful. 6587 Doug 'Army' Armstrong was at his place near Fort Myers and got COVID. He is now back in Canada 2 months early and isolated. Luckily, he tells me the symptoms are not too severe.

Yes, it is weird to see NHL games in Toronto play to an empty arena and yet US venues are usually packed.

Living in Ottawa with truckers is only a major problem if you live in the downtown core. Luckily in the west end near Lincoln Fields the impact is near zero. However, we did see the hundreds of truckers go by on the SJAM Parkway 2 weeks ago. I agree that the protest is now 'old' to say the least.

Good to see the 1965 RMC Glee Club photo. Army and I plus I think one second year were the 2nd bass section. Only problem was that none of us read music so we seldom really sang the 2nd bass parts.



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Letters (concluded)

6632 Don Hansen: I recall my experience with French at Royal Roads. I was a rural Alberta student who had correspondence in French 30 so my oral skills were even more limited than my also limited written French. The French teacher spoke to us substantially in French. I had no idea what the hell was going on and wondered why the government of Canada was wasting its money on me. I made the mistake of communicating the fact that there was no way that I could succeed academically. The result brought me to the attention of the cadet officers and had at least some role in the circle total that was perhaps my main accomplishment as a cadet. Meaningful instruction must come from the place that the student starts at if it is to make real progress.

They've Won by 6533 Gord Forbes

Whether we want to admit it or not, the truckers and their supporters have won. We, the rest of the country, have lost. I'm, off course, referring to the protest in Ottawa, Windsor and Coutts and now spreading around the world. As we are about to enter the third weekend of the protest, we seem to have given up on any attempt to end these demonstrations which, given some of the demands of the protesters, can rightfully be called an insurrection. The protesters have won the media attention, the social media and the discussion since nobody seems to be challenging them.

Politicians at all levels claim there is nothing they can do, except of course the premiers of Alberta and Saskatchewan who have given in the protesters' demands to end vaccine restrictions. Police forces say they can do nothing (public safety of course although who's safety I'm not too sure about). Nobody will call in the military (it's not Canadian, you know). Surely Military Police personnel, who are qualified as peace officers, could help bolster what the Ottawa Police Chief says are insufficient resources. And do you think that one of the Army's tank recovery vehicles, which can move a 60-ton Leopard tank, could move a transport truck?

Some commentators have stated that this protest is nothing like the events of January 6th, 2021. Actually, they're worse. Quick action by the authorities in Washington quelled that event in one day and they have followed up with charges, arrests, and convictions. Canada has let this drag on three weeks with no action in sight. What if we had responded quickly and decisively that first weekend in Ottawa? It has been done in Canada . . . in 1970 during the Quebec crisis when the present Prime Minister's own father took decisive action and probably saved Quebec and the rest of Canada from much more trouble.

And now it has become international, but only in democratic countries. Dictatorships know how they would deal with this situation. And we've picked up a lot of famous, or infamous, supporters. There are the Canadian Conservative politicians such as Pierre Poilievre who seems to hope that this will propel him into the leadership of his party. Although even he has backed off a bit in the last couple of days asking the protesters to please go home. As if?

And of course, there is Donald Trump, the world's best-known ship-disturber. He is just rubbing his hands with glee hoping Canada collapses no doubt and having another excuse to insult Justin Trudeau. Imagine if he had still been in power in Washington.

They call it the freedom convoy. What is the freedom they seek? Nobody's freedom has been taken away. No one demands that anyone gets a vaccine. There are no legal requirements to get a vaccine. However, as with any decision, there are consequences. You are not, and never have been, free to do harm to others either by terrorizing a city or spreading the virus. You are not free to cross the US border without limitations if you are not vaccinated and unwilling to undergo a quarantine. Even the US will not let you in now. The protesters want freedom without responsibility. "I want what I want, but I am not willing to



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They've Won (Concluded)

give anything in return” could well be their motto.

“Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it.”

- George Bernard Shaw

These people are being inconvenienced not oppressed.

“Inconvenience and oppression are not one in the same.”

Patti Christie (in response to my last blog)

However, as I stated above, no matter how you view it, the protesters have won, and that is not good for Canada or any other country infected.

Closing Notes

Thanks as always to the contributors to this edition with the hope that they might stimulate similar inputs for future issues.



REAR: Jetté MJ, Colfer TW, Todd GR, Earle JP, Glaus JV, Archambault A, Eyre KC, Wilson JG, Hargest DE,
CENTRE: Cantin JB (Manager), Emond JC, Griffin NF, Lukey CC, Chevalier PJ, Sawchuk JF, Smith DW,
Johnson LD (A/Manager). FRONT: Mr. R Lamontagne (Chairman), Bury PS, Young PC, A/C LJ Birchall
(Commandant), Bruce DL (Captain), Berger JA, CPO RG Pitt (Coach).

1965 Fencing Team