

# Class of 65 Newsletter

## Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

Number/Numéro 165



February/fevrier 2024

*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

Greetings from sunny Florida. Once again we have a fairly busy edition so I won't clutter it up with superfluous preliminaries, but rather, plunge right in.

### Obituary—6157 Vic Ashdown

I received the following sad news from Vic's wife Michelle:

*On January 12 2023 Victor Vine Ashdown (Col Retired) RMC Cadet Number 6157 Stood Down for his final time at 1:58 am. Could you pass this info to the those this may concern. Thank You, Sincerely Michelle Ashdown.*

The Class of 65 joins in mourning the passing of our friend and classmate Vic and pass along our condolences to Michelle and her family.

### Letter

On another sad note, **6472 Rudy Roelofsen** sent the following: *I'm fortunate to be doing well, but my buddy **6430 Paul Young** is struggling with severe dementia.*

*Thanks for your work on the bulletin!*



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### 2024 TEA Wrap Up

The recent TEA presentation and accompanying Zoom participation was a great success with over 50 people attending either in person or via Zoom. Twelve classmates took advantage of the Zoom connection for a preliminary chat prior to the presentation—**Braham, Bury, Brown, Chiasson, Cowan, Colfer, Emond, Holman, Houghton, Jackson, Mueller and Taylor.**

Special thanks to Charlie Emond for his work on this award and in setting up the Zoom arrangements.

### P8A for the RCAF by 6601 Ernie Cable

The recent media coverage of the selection of the Boeing P-8A Poseidon to replace the CP-140 Aurora was less than enthusiastic. It seemed that the media was subtly supporting the “Made in Canada” Bombardier proposal and that Canada’s aerospace industries were being left behind. The opposite is more accurate, leading me to write the article, “The P-8A Poseidon - The Right Choice for Canada”, that was published as an Op-ed in the Ottawa Citizen (6-8 Jan). You may want to consider it for the Class of 65 Newsletter.

### **The P-8A Poseidon – The Right Choice for Canada**

Ernest Cable

The government’s 30 Nov 2023 announcement to replace CP-140 Aurora aircraft with the Boeing P-8A Poseidon Multi-Mission Aircraft (CMMA) is the right choice for Canada. Bombardier in Montreal had previously announced its intension to submit a maritime derivative of the Bombardier Global 6500 business jet as its CMMA candidate to replace the Aurora. The media emphasized Bombardier’s “Made in Canada” proposal would provide industrial benefits to Canada’s aviation industry, create high-tech jobs for Canadians and promote leading Canadian technology.

After the government’s announcement of the sole-source purchase of 16 American-built P-8A aircraft for C\$10 billion, the Canadian aviation industry called for an open competitive process to select either the Bombardier or Boeing proposal. The government deemed the Bombardier proposal unacceptable as it was not yet built and would not be available until well after 2030. Therefore, there was no empirical performance or industrial benefits data to compare with the P-8A.



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### The P8A (Continued)

Although government sponsorship of the development of the Bombardier CMMA proposal had potential for greater economic benefits for Canada, the development risk, and higher costs to be borne by the Canadian taxpayer were unsupportable. This assessment was based on previous experience in 2015-17 when the federal and Quebec governments spent billions of dollars to sponsor development of Bombardier's flagship C-Series commercial airliner, however, the program failed because of production delays, mechanical problems, and soaring development costs that placed Bombardier in an untenable financial situation. The company was forced to sell the C-Series to Airbus, a European company, which took over development and produced the successful A220 airliner.

Recent history with the RCAF's CH-148 Cyclone helicopter and ongoing issues with the CC-295 Kingfisher fixed-wing search-and-rescue aircraft are stark reminders of soaring development costs to militarized civilian aircraft.

Canada did not give serious consideration to the Japanese-built Kawasaki P-1 surveillance aircraft since it was previously rejected by the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand in favour of the P-8A. More critically, the P-1 is not fully interchangeable with the P-8A already in use by Canada's defence partners. The P-1 was also disadvantaged by the lengthy 8,000 km trans-Pacific logistic supply line from Japan to Canada that would be vulnerable to interdiction by Chinese and Russian potential adversaries during increased geopolitical tension.

The assessment of the Boeing P-8A, developed from the Boeing 737-NG (New Generation) airliner, overwhelmingly supported the selection of the P-8A. The P-8A has a proven capability with over 160 aircraft currently in service with eight of Canada's defence partners, successfully accumulating over 500,000 flight hours on maritime, littoral, and overland profiles similar to those stipulated by the RCAF.

Boeing publicly disclosed that its \$7 billion development cost to convert the 737-NG airliner to the P-8A is being amortized over the sale of more than 160 aircraft. The P-8A is a purpose-built military aircraft that reflects the requirement to operate at lower, more turbulent altitudes and be capable of more aggressive manoeuvring than its airliner predecessor. The airframe was strengthened to accommodate a bomb bay for torpedoes and a purpose-built ordnance area to launch antisubmarine search stores. The P-8A inherited stronger wings from the



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### P8A (Continued)

737-900 and incorporates a modified flight control system allowing increased bank angles and a more responsive auto-throttle for low level operations. To power the additional anti-submarine and ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance) electronics the 90 KVA generators powered by the two CFM International CFM 56 jet engines in the commercial version were replaced by 180 KVA generators; the larger generators required a redesign of the engine nacelles and their wing mountings. After extensive test and evaluation Boeing guaranteed a 25-year life span for the P-8A and the US Navy prime customer deemed the P-8A operationally effective and suitable for service.

Boeing already has a significant presence in Canada. Team Poseidon is building on the more than 550 Boeing tier-one and sub-tier suppliers across all provinces that have manufactured components for all of Boeing's 700-series jetliners, which annually contributed C\$5.3 billion to the Canadian economy and supported 20,000 jobs. For the P-8A program Boeing has partnered with 81 Canadian companies that have provided \$10 million in Canadian content to every P-8A that has ever been built and contributed more than C\$1.5 billion in economic benefits. Canadian aerospace companies participating in the P-8A program are expected to generate about \$357 million per year to Canada's GDP and create more than 2,900 jobs per year for the first 10 years of the contract. The logistical support network is largely in place as the P-8A shares 86 percent commonality with Boeing 737-NG aircraft, 4,000 of which are in service today, with over 100 operated by Canadian airlines.

According to NATO, Russia's submarine presence in the Atlantic has reached unprecedented levels in recent years and China now boasts a fleet of over 70 modern submarines. To counter such threats allies will need to focus on interchangeability where one allied aircraft seamlessly replaces another in the anti-submarine fight without any question as to its capability, capacity, or alignment with allied procedures. The doctrinal shift from employing common capabilities to interchangeability is a profound change as it effectively dictates national procurement strategies. The shift to seamless integration in anti-submarine warfare implies that if eight of Canada's allies are operating the P-8A then Canada should be operating the same aircraft.

The selection of the Boeing P-8A provides long-term industrial benefits to Canada's aviation industry and creates a continuum of high-tech jobs for Canadians, all of which contribute to Canada's GDP growth. The real winners are the RCAF's airmen and airwomen who will



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### P8A (Concluded)

have a proven surveillance aircraft to project Canada's global interests in multi-national coalitions for the next 40 to 50 years.

*Colonel (RCAF Retired) Ernest Cable was the Director of Requirements during the development of the CP-140 Aurora. He was the Commanding Officer of the RCAF's first operational Aurora squadron and Deputy Commander of the RCAF Air Group responsible for Aurora operations.*



**P8A—Poseidon**



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More Letters

**6440 Tony Goode:** To bring you up to speed over the past year, which has been the worst ever in my life, you may wish to include the following in the next edition:  
Just before Christmas, Pat and I returned from a most enjoyable cruise to the southern Caribbean on a relatively new ship, the Celebrity Beyond where we relaxed for 12 days in very comfortable surroundings while we decided on our evening dinner and wine selections, the only decision we had to make while onboard. Unfortunately, I injured my leg in a hotel while we were waiting for our flight home such that I was unable to join my son and granddaughter for skiing close to Georgian Bay in early January. Leg is still bothering me some three weeks afterwards! Even worse, my wife came down with COVID after our return, which just added to the calamities of 2023. As you may be aware, my son Charles suffered a massive fatal heart attack in July, the aftermath of which is still ongoing in terms of family grief. Since then, my wife's courageous battle with Stage 4 Metastatic breast cancer continues but she is doing much better than expected although she is in constant pain. My heart issues returned with a vengeance in early November when I had to spend nearly 30 hours in the emergency department waiting for a transfer to the cardio ward where I had angioplasty to expand 3 of the 10 stents in my heart. Apart from the inevitable osteoarthritis, my health is reasonably good for an octogenarian. Still haven't figured out retirement yet as I continue to provide consulting services to several clients through CFN Consultants (Atlantic) with whom I have worked since 2006 when I left L3 Electronic Systems. I continue as an active Rotarian as does Roger Chiasson as well as serving on the boards of several organizations including the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, the Convoy Cup Foundation, NS Branch of the Naval Association of Canada, and as a member of the Atlantic Priory of the Order of St. George, the NS Canadian Forces Liaison Council, an organisation to encourage employment of members of the Primary Reserve in local industry and government, and last but not least, the Atlantic Branch of the RMC Alumni Association. All of this keeps me very active and engaged, which is the key to enjoying life at this point in one's life.

**6189 Ken Kennedy:** Thanks again for the great work you do keeping us old guys informed. It's on my bucket list to contribute an article or two, particularly on my father 2043 W/C (RAF) Judd Kennedy, my 1960 encounter with Queen Elizabeth and Air Chief Marshal Sir Leslie Norman Hollinghurst, and my 2022 emotional "Trip of a Lifetime" with "In Our Fathers' Footsteps."

FYI, and possible grist for the newsletter mill, I have forwarded a National Post "First Reading" email containing a lengthy rant about the latest Canadian Military Journal issue and the direction of the Armed Forces. Perhaps Gord Forbes might be interested in commenting. Perhaps the Journal's Director and Editor in Chief, Professor Christian Leuprecht might also comment. The article is a precis of the more controversial aspects of the issue and provides a PDF link to the complete issue. (*Reprinted below*)

Keep up the good work. Enjoy the South! Mary and I will be heading south and southwest in our small van in late February.



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### First Reading Article

*Curated by the National Post's own Tristin Hopper, First Reading is a Canadian politics newsletter published Monday to Thursday at 6:30 p.m. Eastern Time and noon on Saturdays .*

The Canadian Military Journal is the official peer-reviewed academic journal of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Published quarterly since 2000, it has the stated mission “to enhance the continuing development of the profession of arms in Canada.” Its inaugural issue discussed [the expansion of NATO](#). In 2005, it [devoted an entire issue](#) to Arctic sovereignty. As recently as 2020, it was [considering the implications of filling the RCAF](#) with unmanned drones.

But the [latest edition](#) — which was just posted online — contains little to no mention of strategy, geopolitics or the avalanche of contemporary problems facing the Canadian Armed Forces. There’s not a single reference to the [recruiting crisis](#), which has left vacancies of up to 40 per cent in some departments. No mention of the plummeting maintenance standards that recently prompted the commander of the Royal Canadian Navy to declare that his fleet was [in a “storm”](#) with no end in sight. No discussion of why Canada is slashing its military budget even as its peer countries [do the exact opposite](#).

Instead — in a signal of just how far the Canadian Armed Forces has embraced far-left “anti-racist” ideology — the entire issue is devoted to how the Canadian military is a racist, patriarchal, anti-transgender den of colonialist oppression that needs to be torn down and remade from scratch.

“With this special issue we provide readers with insights and recommendations for meaningful military culture change,” reads an introduction.

The issue lacks the journal typical sections devoted to strategy or military history. Instead, it’s a series of 13 essays all devoted to what an introduction describes as a “feminist intersectional trauma-informed approach to reimagine and transform CAF culture.”

The issue’s central essay is co-written by Maya Eichler, a professor of political and Canadian studies and women’s studies at Halifax’s Mount Saint Vincent University.

Eichler paints a picture of a “problematic military culture” that is shot through with “patriarchy, colonialism, white supremacy, heteronormativity, ableism, and classism.”

After devoting extended paragraphs to each cultural infraction, Eichler concludes that the Canadian Armed Forces must be remade via an “anti-oppression framework” of “feminist, decolonial, critical race, queer, critical disability, and critical political economy theories.”

Eichler notes this is “not an easy task, but a necessary one if DND/CAF wants to move the yardstick on culture change.”



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### First Reading (Continued)

Another feature, by York University psychotherapist Tammy George, frames the Canadian Armed Forces as being poisoned by “institutional whiteness.”

“In order for meaningful, sustained culture change to occur, there must be a recognition by the white majority of the way in which whiteness organizes lives,” she writes.

Leigh Spanner, a feminist postdoctoral research fellow, wrote that the CAF’s system of supporting military families was anti-feminist and patriarchal.

Ash Grover, a researcher in “feminist anti-militarism,” argues that the military might have fewer instances of post-traumatic stress disorder if they paid closer attention to “anti-oppressive theory” and how “acts of ‘othering’ can result in responses typically associated with post-traumatic stress disorder.”

Alan Okros, a professor at Royal Military College, writes that the military will never escape its harmful practices unless it can move beyond an identity that prioritizes “violence and aggression, institutional unity and hierarchy.”

On the whole, the issue’s contributors are very open about the fact that they are adherents of “critical race theory” — a term that appears in the text five times.

“Critical race theory,” sometimes called “anti-racism” or “diversity, equity and inclusion” is very different than traditional Canadian notions of tolerance or racial sensitivity.

Developed in the United States, it holds that the entire institutional structure of the West is irredeemably racist, and that “equity” can only be achieved by prescribing special treatment for “equity-seeking groups.” Anti-racism doctrine holds that mere neutrality on someone’s ethnicity or background is itself racist, since it inevitably results in disparate outcomes.

In just the last few years, the Trudeau government has leaned hard into anti-racism ideology. In 2021, the Privy Council [issued an order](#) that the federal public service would now be informed by “anti-racist” tenets. In 2023 the Trudeau government founded the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat with the explicit goal of overseeing funding, data-collection and policy that would be specifically directed along racial lines.

Throughout, the military has been one of the more conspicuous targets of this anti-racist makeover.

In 2020, the federal government stated publicly that the Department of National Defence was replete with “systemic racism and discrimination” and [commissioned an audit](#) on how it could be eliminated.





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### First Reading (Concluded)

“Racism in Canada is not a glitch in the system; it is the system. Colonialism and intersecting systems such as patriarchy, heteronormativity and ableism constitute the root causes of inequality within Canada,” it read.

Ever since, senior military leadership has been quite open about stating that they are now an “anti-racist” organization committed to implementing the various prescriptions of critical race theory.

“The Defence Team is dedicated to becoming an anti-racist organization,” reads [the introduction](#) to a February “anti-racism toolkit” that was circulated to serving members.



*The latest edition of the Canadian Military Journal also featured this photo of a CAF member conferring with a soldier from the People's Republic of China during the Canadian deployment to Mali in 2019. China easily ranks as Canada's leading military and strategic rival, and the Royal Canadian Navy regularly deploys to the South China Sea as part of a standing check against Chinese expansionism. However, this innocuous photo is the only time that China is mentioned in the entire journal (the journal also contains zero mentions of the word “warfare,” while we're on the subject). (Cpl Richard Lessard/Task Force Mali)*

**(Editors Note: Any Comments??)**



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### Movie Review by 6559 Gerry Mueller

This month's movie recommendation is something completely different; whatever the opposite of an action movie is called, this fits that category.

I doubt I would ever have found this on my own. I was talking over coffee after church with a friend and former colleague, and mentioned watching last month's movie, *The Children Act*, and how much I admired Dame Emma Thompson's acting skills. I said something like, I could watch her reading the telephone book and find it interesting. She suggested this movie came close to that! As a bonus, the other principal character is acted by the late Alan Rickman, whom I also admire.

#### **The Song of Lunch (2010)**

Director: Niall MacCormick

Producer: Masterpiece (for British Broadcasting Corporation)

Writer: Niall MacCormick, Christopher Reid (based on his poem *The Song of Lunch*, Faber & Faber, London, 2010)

Principal Actors: Alan Rickman, Dame Emma Thompson

Note: Currently (Jan 2024) available on Prime Video

This is a short (48+ minutes) made for television film based on a narrative poem. Every word one hears is from the poem, although some short passages of the poem are omitted. All the dialogue is between two protagonists, who are never named, only referred to as He and She. A voice-over, spoken by Alan Rickman, is descriptive and can be taken as the inner thoughts of He. Effectively, the scriptwriters have turned the poem into a screenplay, without changing one word.

Aside from some "framing shots" the action between He and She takes place entirely at a restaurant table. The plot is, from the point of view of He, a middle-age tragedy, from the point of view of She, perhaps comedy, or even farce.

He is a fiftyish book editor, jaded and cynical, also burned out by his work, as He sees it, of turning trash into gold, or reasonable facsimile of good writing. She is a somewhat younger woman, married to a successful author living in Paris, with two teenage sons, obviously content and happy. He and She had been lovers, with the relationship ending some 15 years earlier and they have not seen each other since. At He's initiative (although He briefly fools himself into thinking it was She) they meet for lunch at a restaurant in Soho that was their favourite, although it seems to have been favoured more by He than She. Memories deceive.

The restaurant has not changed externally, but the inside is nothing like He remembers. Instead of a noisy, smoky, cheerful neighborhood *trattoria* it is now an upscale restaurant for business lunches. The waiters



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### Review (continued)

are snotty, the tablecloths are white, Chianti no longer comes in basket covered bottles, and the menu is mostly pizzas. Lunch, which He had intended to be a lover's reunion, possibly even a resumption of the affair, turns into a disaster for He, Even his one published (sales just into 3 figures!) book of poetry, which in He's mind was about the end of the affair and a quest in which He sees himself as Orpheus and She as Euridice, is dissected by She as neatly as she has dissected the sea bass which is her main course. After drinking almost two bottles of Chianti (She barely touches the one glass He has poured for her) and a glass of *grappa*, He staggers to the toilet, drunkenly gets lost and falls asleep on the way back. He returns to the restaurant to find She has left, and, the final insult, has paid the bill.

It sounds boring! It isn't! In the hands of two outstanding actors, it becomes riveting drama. It is done with very little physical movement, mostly through gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice. Rickman's background narration is a masterclass in voice-over; he captures the state of mind of He with subtle changes in pace, inflection, shifts in pitch. Thompson conveys perfectly that She is a happy woman, content with how her life has gone, wife, mother, life in Paris not quite what one thinks it could be, with a mind as before, sharp as a razor. All this with few words, and perfect control of her face.

Bringing poetry to film without changing a single word is difficult. Poetry hints, suggests, draws on bringing allusions to the hearer's/reader's mind. It is play on words, rhythm, hinted at rhyme. Film, on the other hand, makes explicit. To take the one medium, poetry, and turn it into the other, film, without the poetry becoming lost is hard. To do it in such a minimalist way, basically two talking heads and reading the poem as background, and blending the two seamlessly, is craftsmanship of the highest order. This is a little gem!

### Network by 6533 Gord Forbes

Recently, I watched the 1976 movie, *Network*. It is quite a classic. It stars Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Peter Finch, and Robert Duval. What got me thinking was the on-air exhortation by Peter Finch's character, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!" This was said during a news broadcast on a fictional television network. He demands that people open their windows and shout that statement for the world to hear. And apparently millions did.

Maybe it is time for us all to open our windows and yell, "We're mad as hell and we're not going to take it anymore!"

Most of us, I believe, are what would be called middle of the road and pragmatic. It is not a bad place to be. We are reasonable people who do not adhere to any of the fringes in life. But we are not being heard. The extremists have silenced us. But I say, it is time for us to "not take it anymore".



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### Network (continued)

So, let's speak out:

- To silence the extremists at both ends of the political, economic, and social spectrum. Their voices are not our voices.
- Against those who try to tell us what a horrible country Canada is. Canada is a wonderful place, one of the best democracies in the world and a country that is not afraid to acknowledge mistakes it has made. How many other countries do you know that have undergone a truth and reconciliation process?
- Against those who would, or threaten to, break the country apart. Are you listening provincial governments?
- Against those political leaders who would, and have, infringed on our rights. The notwithstanding clause is being used for just that purpose. It can be used to take away all of our Charter rights. It has to go.
- Against those who spread misinformation and conspiracy theories. Be skeptical about these sorts of things and correct them when you can.
- Against negativity of any sort. Negativity brings inaction which leads nowhere.
- Against bias and discrimination of all types. Remember:
  - o Most Muslims are not terrorists;
  - o Jews do not control the world's banks, nor do they carry out strange rituals;
  - o Most African-Canadians are not criminals;
  - o Asians did not cause SARS or COVID 19, it just happened to originate from there;
  - o Most Indigenous people are not slovenly layabouts, but residential schools did do great damage to their society;
  - o People of other political stripes are not the enemy;
  - o Immigrants are not the problem. The state of our country has caused most of the issues they are accused of;
  - o Poor people did not choose to be that way; but



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### Network (Concluded)

- o Most murders in Canada are perpetrated by white Christians so don't be smug about your whiteness.

Respect of others goes a long way to heal rifts.

Each of us can reach out to others and in our own, hopefully respectful way, get the message across that we are in fact mad as hell and not going to take it anymore.

### Closing Notes

Thanks for some interesting and thought provoking articles. I hope they might stimulate some debate in future editions. In the meantime stay healthy.



**Leopard 2 A7V MBT**