

Class of 65 Newsletter

Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

Number/Numéro 167



April/May—apr/mai 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

Sorry about the delay in getting this out, but we just got back from our sojourn South and have trying to get back into the home groove. Once again there is a lot of material to cover so I am not going to take up space with a bunch of introductory notes other than to make my annual plea for input from those who so far have resisted the urge over the past 13 1/2 years. My current distribution list is 228, sadly a little down from the start due to the passing of a number of classmates. Only two so far have chosen to be removed from the list and this remains an option if you no longer find it of interest or if it is just one more excess piece of information. That said, 137 of you have submitted at least one article, leaving 91 who have chosen to remain silent. -You know who you are, how about an update on yourselves? We would love to hear from you. Based on some of the prior inputs, nothing is too trivial to report!

Ottawa-Montreal Gathering

By 6496 Charlie Emond

Chers camarades de classe: Nous vous sollicitons afin de connaître votre intérêt à vous joindre à une rencontre passerelle des anciens du CMR60, RR61 et RMC65 de la région de Montréal et d'Ottawa à Hawkesbury sur l'heure du midi entre la mi-mai ou mi-juin, tout comme nous l'avons faite à quelques reprises avant que la Covide bascule nos vies. Profitons des années de mobilité qui nous restent puisque le succès de cette initiative sera relié en partie à la participation de chaque région.

Dans le passé, plusieurs ont profité du co-voiturage, donc ne vous gênez pas d'échanger entre-vous votre besoin ou votre disponibilité. Les conjointes ou partenaires sont la bienvenue. Des détails plus spécifiques suivront si nous réussissons à avancer ce projet.

Veillez me (cemond6496@rogers.com) faire part de vos intentions et de toute date ou autre facteur limitant, ou suggestions que vous souhaiteriez que je prenne en compte avant de verrouiller les derniers détails.

Charles Emond et Pierre Falardeau



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Ottawa-Montreal Gathering (Concluded)

Fellow classmates: I am canvassing your interest in participating in yet another Bridging Reunion of RMC65, RR61 & CMR60 alumni from both the Ottawa & Montreal regions in Hawkesbury at lunchtime between mid-May to mid-June along the same lines as we enjoyed before Covid upended our social lives. Let's take advantage of the years of mobility that we have left, especially since the success of this initiative will be somewhat proportional to the degree of participation from each region.

As in the past, I encourage carpooling, so don't be afraid to discuss your needs or availability with each other. Spouses or partners are welcome. More details will follow if we are successful in moving this project forward.

Please let me (cemond6496@rogers.com) know your intentions and any dates or other limiting factors or suggestions that you would like me to consider before locking in the final details.

Charlie Emond & Pierre Falardeau

Class of 65 Endowment Fund Report

The following is a summary of the latest report on the Class Endowment Fund as provided by the RMC Alumnae Association.

Endowed Funds: This Fund represents the capital portion of your Endowment and is typically not touched. It increases as a result of annual donations or other fundraising activities undertaken. The amount listed in the Endowed Fund would not reflect the gains or losses from investment market performance (instead this is reflected in the Restricted Funds of the Endowment Report) – as it is important to track the history of your ongoing fundraising efforts.

Endowed Fund Balance as of 31 December 2023 = \$507,490.40.

- Note: Your Balance in this Fund represents an increase of \$3,045.00 from 31 December 2022.

Endowed Restricted Funds: This Fund represents the amount of money you have available to expend on the purpose of your Endowment in any given year. This Fund reflects interest attributed to this Endowment based on the market returns achieved by the Foundation's Balanced Investment Fund, any Benefactions made in accordance with the purpose of the Endowment, and an annual Endowment administration fee.

Endowed Restricted Fund Balance as of 31 December 2023 = \$561,949.73.

- Note: Your balance in this Fund represents an increase of \$14,907.67 from 31 December 2022.



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Endowment Fund Report (Concluded)

Endowment Total: Your Endowment Total represents the actual value of your Endowment as 31 December 2023 and is achieved by adding the Endowed Funds with your Restricted Funds.

Endowment Total Balance as of 31 December 2023 = \$1,069,440.13.

- Note: The total value of your Endowment has increased \$17,952.67 from 31 December 2022.

March 2024 Update on Royal Military Colleges of Canada Alumni Association (RMCAA) activities in response to the Arbour Report

Context: The Canadian Military Colleges' (CMC) alumni community is keenly aware of reporting that has spotlighted symptoms of a toxic culture within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)/ Department of National Defence (DND), particularly around sexual misconduct and suicide. The Independent External Comprehensive Review, otherwise known as the "Arbour Report", contained two recommendations focusing on the CMCs:

- 28) that "The Cadet Wing responsibility and authority command structure should be eliminated" and
- 29) that "A combination of Defence Team members and external experts, led by an external education specialist, should conduct a detailed review of the benefits, disadvantages and costs, both for the CAF and more broadly, of continuing to educate ROTP cadets at the military colleges."

The Canadian Military Colleges Review Board (CMCRB) was announced by the Minister of National Defence on 6 December 2023 with a 12-month mandate to focus on recommendation 28 and parts of 29, as we reported in e-Veritas on 1 January 2024. They started work on 15 January 2024. The CMCRB completed four weeks of orientation briefings and made their first visit to Kingston 12-16 February 2024 to visit Canadian Defence Academy Headquarters and the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC). They visited the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean (CMRSJ) the week of 4 March 2024.

RMCAA has established a line of communication with staff in the Secretariat for the CMCRB. We provided CMCRB Secretariat Staff with information on RMCAA's mission and history and on the process that we have been engaged in with the membership and outside advisors to prepare a submission to the CMCRB to inform their work, as noted below.

We have been advised to expect that CMCRB will want to engage with us early in their mandate, during the deliberate engagement phase of their work plan.



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March 2024 Update (Continued)

RMCAA's mission, in the context of the Canadian Military Colleges Review:

Even while acknowledging very real cultural problems, the RMCAA firmly believes the CMCs have a valuable role to play going forward and wants to participate in the review in order to advance this position and be an active participant in making the CMCs better.

We are conscious of our role as an organization to represent a membership made up of everyone who has attended a CMC, including current students, serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), civilian leaders in the Defence Team, veterans serving in industry or other sectors, and retirees serving as volunteers.

We recognize the CMC Review Board's work could have an existential impact on the future of the CMCs. The Royal Military Colleges of Canada Alumni Association is uniquely placed to advocate for the continuation and improvement of the CMCs. To be credible, we need to be seen as 1) recognizing the need for change; and 2) having something substantive and evidence-based to say on how the CMCs can be improved.

To do this, RMCAA engaged outside consultants, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), through a competitive process to conduct a thorough examination. This work was guided by a Steering Committee, carefully selected for their expertise and the credibility that they bring. Information on the role of BCG and on the make-up of the Steering Committee was provided to RMCAA branch and class representatives by e-mail on 13 November 2024.

Information provided to Secretariat in the preliminary meeting:

In our communication with the Secretariat, we noted RMCAA's mission of "advancement" (supporting continuation and improvement) of the CMCs and our role as an organization that represents a membership made up of everyone who has attended a CMC, including current students, serving members of the CAF, civilian leaders in the Defence Team, veterans serving in industry or other sectors, and retirees serving as volunteers. We noted the continuing efforts, since before the merger of the RMC Club and RMC Foundation in 2021, to enhance the impact of the alumni organization. We also discussed the history of philanthropic contributions that the alumni have made to the CMCs since the 1880s.

We described RMCAA's approach to preparing to engage with the CMCRB. This approach is familiar to you from previous communications, but is recapped below:

- We engaged outside consultants, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), to conduct a thorough examination. This work was guided by a Steering Committee, carefully selected for their expertise and the credibility that they bring.



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March 2024 Update (Continued)

- A major focus of the Steering Committee's work has been ensuring that a balanced view of both the positives and the negatives of the military college experience, representing the perspectives of the CMC alumni community writ large, guided the examination of the CMCs. This is to ensure that any submission RMCAA makes to the CMCRB considers all viewpoints in the process.
- Thus, the Steering Committee directed our consultants from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), to conduct an in-depth survey of 1400+ RMCAA members to gather objective data on a myriad of specific topics related to their CMC experience; 40+ in-depth interviews and focus groups with various experts and interested parties; and analyze the more than 200 individual and group submissions and testimonials received since June 2022 by the RMCAA from various CMC classes and alumni at our rmcaa.aacmr.iecr.response@gmail.com mailbox. They conducted a statistical analysis of the results of all data gathered in the survey, interviews, and e-mail submissions to determine the degree to which certain elements of the CMC experience need to change (or not).
- This analysis was benchmarked against US, UK, and Australian partner military academies to compare and contrast approaches, and then compared to civilian university processes and contexts where relevant.

Additional information for members on process and findings

- The examination and analysis conducted confirm both the important role of the CMCs in building leaders and the need for improvement and modernization.
 - While 85% believe their CMC experience prepared them to be leaders, and roughly 2/3 of respondents had a good experience overall at the CMCs, the corollary is that roughly 1/3 of respondents did not.
 - Moreover, a certain percentage of CMC attendees experienced some significantly traumatizing events. Those that did not personally experience or witness traumas may have a difficult time understanding/acknowledging that others were traumatized, and that the system failed.
- The BCG team and Steering Committee systematically examined the CMC cadet experience and studied the various elements beneath the "four pillars of academic, military training, physical fitness and bilingualism" as separate aspects of the experience needing varying degrees of change relative to one another in order to impact and correct identified flaws in the program while retaining all the positive benefits and outcomes of the program. They also reviewed the Cadet Wing leadership structure and approach in great detail.



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March 2024 Review (Concluded)

- They applied a data-driven process to identify a range of mitigations from mild alterations to bold changes. The Steering Committee members debated the merits of each option for change, landing on the recommended approach via consensus, where the majority felt the proposed change would be significant enough to both improve the experience for the cadet population, and also preserve the positive outcomes that underpinned the four pillars in the first place - maintaining the "degree with a difference" as our north star, and recognizing that CMC cadets are not the same as their civilian counterparts, for good reason, given their future roles in the CAF with the acceptance of unlimited liability and responsibility for the application of lethal force.
- The process culminated in identifying seven actionable propositions for change, each of which has three or four sub-components that specify necessary changes to ensure better outcomes for all CMC cadets. More information on these propositions will be forthcoming (see below)

Next Steps:

The RMCAA Board of Directors has been briefed on the results of the Steering Committee's work and is actively considering next steps.

The Steering Committee's work places the RMCAA in a high degree of readiness to make a professional, comprehensive, evidence-based submission to CMCRB. However, without having met with the CMCRB to confirm their expectations, and to better understand the detailed questions they are examining as part of their mandate, the form and final content of the RMCAA's submission cannot yet be finalized. We are expecting to have an iterative series of engagements with the CMCRB throughout their mandate, beginning with a first engagement in March 2024.

We intend to keep our members informed as the CMC Review Board moves forward with its work. To that end, the RMCAA website has been re-organized for easier access to our Arbour Response Updates. Through that website and through future updates like this one, we will provide further information on the process, the evidence and analysis that underpins the work, the comparisons with international best practices, and recommendations for improvement in response to recommendations 28 and 29.

In the meantime, we want to continue to hear from members about the issues relating to the Arbour Report and the future of the CMCs that concern you. You can reach us through our rmcaa.account@rmcalumni.ca mailbox (Note new email address). Your feedback can help us to better understand the perspectives of CMC alumni, whether you send it directly, through your class secretary or through your local branch leadership.

Please remember, any person who has attended a CMC, whether undergraduate, graduate studies or continuing studies, is a member of the RMCAA.



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Movie Review by 6559 Gerry Mueller

First, a revisit to last month's **The Monuments Men**, in which I noted some anachronisms. About one I wrote "... the film [shows] a Christmas gift parcel, including a seemingly 45 rpm sized record of family greetings, a recording medium nonexistent at the time. More, on the record is also a sung "Have yourself a merry little Christmas" using a text not written until 1957." I got a thoughtful email from self-styled **Doug 'the nit picker' Cope 6611**, noting and supplying photographic evidence that at the time there existed 78 rpm records roughly 6 inches in diameter that could be cut on home equipment. Looking at the scene again, I agree with Doug, and as for the record appearing to spin slower than 78 rpm, that is most likely the familiar interaction of frame rates with the rotational speed of things like wheels in movies. Finally, the second sentence in the above quote could have been clearer; *Have yourself a merry little Christmas* indeed was written in 1943, and recorded by Judy Garland in 1944, thus hearing it near Christmas 1944 is not an anachronism. However, the lyrics changed in 1954, and it was that later version that is heard in the film. As Doug notes, whoever chose the music for the film was likely not even aware that there were earlier lyrics. Thanks to Doug for taking the trouble to write, and please, all of you who read my screeds, feel free to email your comments and suggestions.

Now for this month's movie. I have heard that many people have at least one favorite movie (or book) that they have watched (read) many times, because in some way it speaks about their own life. This one is mine; I've watched it at least once every 4 or 5 years since I first saw it, so am at about 10 viewings, and I fully expect that I will be watching it again. What it says to me about my own life, or why I am fascinated by it, I have not yet figured out!

All That Jazz (1979)

Director/Choreographer: Bob Fosse (Film: *Sweet Charity*, *Cabaret*, *Lenny*; Theatre: Chicago)

Writers: Robert Alan Arthur, Bob Fosse

Producer: Robert Alan Arthur (20th Century Fox, Columbia Pictures)

Principal Actors: Roy Scheider (*Jaws*, *The French Connection*), Jessica Lange (*Tootsie*, *Sweet Dreams*), Leland Palmer, Ann Reinking (*Annie*), Ben Vereen (*Roots*), John Lithgow (3rd *Rock from the Sun*)

Note: Not currently on any major streaming service; there is a low-definition version on Youtube, soundtrack in English, subtitled in Spanish badly out-of-synch [<https://youtu.be/ccfYFNjNy1k>]; DVD and BluRay available on amazon.ca.

In 1974, while editing the film *Lenny* and choreographing *Chicago*, Bob Fosse suffered a major heart attack and had bypass surgery, then much more serious and not nearly as routine as it is today. From his reflections afterwards comes *All That Jazz*, which is "biographical" if covering a few months of a life is biography, and somewhat predictive, in that like his movie counterpart Fosse died of a massive heart attack in 1987 at age



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Movie Review (Continued)

60. The plot is at once straight forward and complex. Joe Gideon (Roy Scheider) is simultaneously casting, choreographing, and staging a new Broadway musical *NY/LA*, and editing his film *The Stand-Up* (the parts we see are a comic take-off on the new, in the late 70s, theories on death and dying and grief by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross). Associated in the musical project, along with stock Broadway financiers, producers and directors, is Gideon's ex-wife Audrey Paris (Leland Palmer). Also in the scene are Gideon's current girlfriend Katie Jagger (Ann Reinking), and Victoria Porter (Deborah Geffner), a dancer/singer cast in his show by Gideon, with whom he starts an affair. (Aside from Gideon obviously being Fosse himself, Audrey Paris parallels Fosse's estranged wife but still frequent collaborator and star Gwen Vernon, and Ann Reinking more or less plays herself, being Fosse's girlfriend at the time the movie was made. Add to that Bob Fosse originally was going to play Gideon, but it was pointed out that given his heart problems, and the physical demands of the role added to directing, he probably wouldn't survive the shoot.

The stage production has the usual delays, complications, and financial issues; the movie is over time and over budget. Gideon, who apparently lives on mostly Dexedrine and alcohol develops serious heart disease and is advised to take several weeks rest in hospital. His hospital room becomes party central, Gideon goes back to work, his disease worsens, and he has to undergo bypass surgery if he is to have any chance of living. Meanwhile, in an interesting look at the money side of Broadway, the financial suits look at other directors to take over, and in doing the math discover the insurance they have on Gideon would make them more profit than opening the show. All the action is interspersed with gorgeous dance scenes, and exceptional cinematography. In the end Gideon dies, in what arguably is the most overblown, song and dance death scene ever seen on stage or screen, including grand opera.

What makes the movie fascinating is that interspersed with what is happening in Gideon's real life are conversations with Angelique (Jessica Lange), presumably the Angel of Death or Death herself. The conversations delve into Gideon's early life, his relationship failures, and his dissolute and self-destructive lifestyle. The conversations are effectively Gideon doing with this lovely personation of Death what he does with all attractive women, he flirts and tries to seduce her and in the end is seduced by her into surrendering. He joins with her in fantasy and dies in real life. What makes me so fascinated in the overall story, and what I have not yet figured out (and probably won't because I think the film makes it deliberately ambiguous) is what we are really seeing. Is the real life action we see actually happening in the weeks or months depicted, or, like the conversations with Angelique, is all of it happening in Gideon's dying mind? Every time I watch this film, I come away, not knowing! And I have still not answered Joe Gideon's question to the audience (or God?), his almost last "real life" words in the film, breaking the 4th wall (actually ceiling), and possibly even



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Movie Review (Concluded)

stepping out of role, "What's the matter? Don't you like musical comedy?"

All That Jazz was nominated for nine 1979 Oscars and won four. None of the wins were in the major categories, but more "technical". One was Best Film Editing (it was also nominated for Best Cinematography), likely for outstanding depiction of the blood, sweat, and tears of stage and film dancing, but possibly for one scene very near the beginning (approx.. 6 min. 20 sec.), which shows a dancer spinning on his/her own vertical axis, but for each 360 degrees spin it is a different dancer, perfectly aligned. Today that would be a trivial task for digital film editing, but in the late 1970s it was a technical feat like no other. *All That Jazz* did win the 1980 Cannes Film Festival *Palme d'Or*; it is #14 in the list of Greatest Film Musicals by the American Film Institute (in 2006), and was deemed "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" by the Library of Congress (in 2001).

If you haven't seen it, try to do so at least once, even if you don't get hooked on it like me!

6559 Gerry Mueller (gerry.mueller@sympatico.ca)

P.S. The books that I read again regularly are *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. And I haven't yet figured out why I keep rereading them either but am just about due for another go.

West Point Mission Statement by 6560 Andrew Nell estyn

CAN YOU STATE THE REVISED WEST POINT MOTTO, NOW CALLED MISSION STATEMENT, WITHOUT TAKING A BREATH?

"To build, educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets to be commissioned leaders of character committed to the Army Values and ready for a lifetime of service to the Army and Nation." Vice: DUTY HONOR COUNTRY

Mottos serve as rallying cries! As testimonials to history, heritage, sacrifice, fealty and pride. A sacred IDENTITY! The shorter, the more effective. In that lies their power and motivational value. Why this proclivity to change everything! The motto has a long honoured tradition of service to the Nation, the Army and the Academy. As a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada I would abhor any change to its motto TRUTH DUTY VALOUR.



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Portugal by 6533 Gord Forbes

Since I was 'discovered' in Portugal by Wayne McQuinn, I guess I should write about the experience. (Of course, when have I not written about something.)

Other than the opportunity to get out of a Canadian winter for a month, the lure of Portugal for me was that it was one of the few countries in western Europe that I had never been to before. I travelled to most other such countries during my naval and civilian careers, usually on business. I had never spent a month on vacation in any other country.

We had gone to CAA Travel to arrange the trip. They in turn dealt with JM Vacations in Toronto for the bookings. JM Vacations did a great job including having a local agent in the area where we stayed.

Impressions of Portugal

The thought that keeps coming to mind when I try to describe Portugal is a land of hills and trees. There doesn't seem to be any really flat land in any of the areas we saw, particular Algarve in the south where we spent our time. And I don't think I have ever seen such a proliferation and variety of trees in any place as small as Portugal. Fruit trees abounded; pine trees, palm trees, cork oaks and so many other kinds that I had never seen before. Imagine fresh oranges all year round. They grow over a dozen varieties that allows this to happen. The story of cork oaks is a story in itself. Portugal produces half of the cork in the world.

We found the people of Portugal very friendly and helpful. They appear to be very proud of their country. It is certain kinds of tourists that seem to be the pain in the . . . well you get the idea. At that time of year, February, we found the vast majority of tourists were from Canada. Who could blame them.

It is grammatically wrong to say the Algarve. Al at the beginning of a word is Arabic for 'the'. There are over 50 thousand words and place names (such as Albufiera, the town where we stayed) in the Portuguese language that begin with al, all derived from the Moors who ruled Portugal and Spain for several hundred years. Their architecture is still very evident throughout the country. You often see Catholic churches that are square rather than the cross shape the is usual in such churches. The square churches are built on old Moorish mosques after the Moors were ejected from the country in the 13th century. Even the chimneys reflect Moorish architecture in many places.

Our experience

Through the travel agency, we had rented an apartment in a large tourist apartment complex called Cerro Mar (literally hill and sea). From it we had a beautiful view downhill to Old Town and the ocean.



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Portugal (Continued)



We had flown into Lisbon and spent our first night there. I had rented a car and drove to Albufiera. But I quickly discovered that a car was not necessary, so I turned it in on the third day. I don't recommend renting a car. Local transportation is very good throughout Portugal and into neighbouring countries (Ask Wayne about his experience with that).

The travel agency had an agent in the town who visited a number of resorts where they had clients. This agent had organized a large number of tours and trips that could be booked. Most were one day excursions, but there were also multiday trips to various places. We took several one-day excursions and one three-day trip. That trip took us the Seville and Algeciras Spain, Tangier, Morocco, and Gibraltar. That trip was the highlight of our vacation although all of the others were worthwhile.

The View from our Apartment



Camel Rides –Tangiers (I Didn't try)



St Michael's Cave –Gibraltar



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Portugal (Continued)

We walked a lot, usually uphill or downhill. It did wonders. For the first week or so, I wore an elastic wrap on my troublesome right knee. From then on, I was able to do without despite walking more, including down and up the one hundred stairs to and from Old Town. I talk of Old Town because we spent a lot of time there. It is the site of the original fishing village although any sign of that is gone. It is full of restaurants and tourist shops. We ate there a lot including an English Breakfast when we met the McQuinns for the first Class of '65 Albufiera branch meeting. Every restaurant seems to offer all day English Breakfasts. However, the local food was very good. A lot of seafood, as you would expect by the ocean, although many of the offerings were not what you find in Canada. Monkfish (the stew of this is delicious), seabass, and a lot of crustaceans. But there were also pork, lamb, and Portuguese steaks. Fresh salads were part of almost all dinners. Oh, and you cannot forget the custard tarts that we ate for almost all our deserts. I think that the only thing that kept my weight under control was all of the walking.

For you golf lovers, the town of Vilamoura is a paradise. It has about four golf clubs including one that has five 18-hole courses. The town also has a huge marina.

The coastline is a mixture of beautiful beaches and rugged cliffs, often right next to each other.



Albufiera Beach



Atlantic Coastline



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Portugal (Concluded)

Lessons Learned

There are always things that you learn on trips like this. You learn a few words of the language. You learn things about the culture, people, and history. At times during its history, Portugal has been ruled by the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Visi-Goths, Berbers and Moors, and Spanish. It was the first country to develop and rule a worldwide empire. Its two unique exports are Port (remember mess dinners) and Vinho Verde (literally 'green wine'). It also produces half of the world's cork. You will not find any Portuguese wines with screw tops. And they do produce some very good wine. Most of their wine that you find in Canadian liquor stores come from the Douro region. But almost every other region in the country has their own wine varieties including Algarve (I have a couple of bottles in my wine rack). Moorish influence is very evident in Portuguese architecture even to their chimneys.

But you also learn about what you miss at home. My list includes:

My bed

My computer

Three ply toilet paper.

Is Portugal a worthwhile place to go? Most definitely.

On that note, I'll leave you. If you have any questions, just ask, or wait until I get to a class lunch soon (I hope).

Letters

6362 Peter Jackson: I was sorry to see that we had lost Hugh Gordon. Hugh came to the Strathconas in Germany as Regimental Signals Officer in 1967. During the major Fall exercise in either 67 or 68, I was given a new role as Damage Control Officer. The aim was to reduce the inconvenience and hazards to German civilians caused by thousands of armed vehicles and heavy trucks rolling through their towns and on the roads.

I was given a jeep and a couple of 3/4 ton trucks, along with a crew of about 10 troopers normally employed as stewards in the messes and a gym sergeant who spoke German. It was quite a nice tasking as the weather was good and the senior steward, a corporal, decided that I, (as the senior officer) deserved a hot coffee each morning and a warm toddy to help me sleep.

Our job was to follow along behind the Regiment and ameliorate any damage that occurred. One Saturday, the whole Corps (or whatever it was) was on the move and our route took us through a small German village in a rural area.



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Letters (Continued)

Unfortunately, the recce guys hadn't been advised that we had a bridge layer in our convoy. The bridge is 45 feet long and rests upside down on top of a Centurion chassis which is 28 feet long, so there is quite a bit of overhang. On one particularly tight corner, that overhang collided with the second story corner of a brick house, knocking a good portion of the corner to the street. I told my crew to start cleaning up using the shovels and brooms that constituted our weapons for this role.

I then decided to try to catch up so I could radio the incident to "higher authority" which was the British group responsible for damage reparations. The Brits had made a point of trying to avoid multiple reports of the same damage incident so I wanted to send my message via RHQ. I then spent a couple of hours trying to make radio contact when I came upon an area where the whole regiment, about 55 tanks or AVRE vehicles (bridge layers or dozer tanks) had left a soft field and deposited all the mud on the main road.

I was able to get through to the RHQ and told them of my problem. Hugh replied that if there was mud on the road, I should clear it off, since that was what I was there for. My reply was "thanks a lot buddy, it's a foot thick and a mile long. At which time the CO took the mike from Hugh's hand and advised that my voice procedure was not appropriate.:-)

After a quick "Roger out", I returned to the village with the damaged house which took another couple of hours. When I got there, I found my men lounging around and none of the mess cleaned up. My sergeant was able to head me off before I blew a head gasket, and advised that they had started to clean up, but the local women had come out and told them to leave it. It was Saturday and they would clean it up for church the next day. Shortly afterwards, church bells rang and doors opened to reveal just about every woman in the village with brooms, pails and buckets.

I then gathered my damage control team and spent about four hours driving back the same route to find the Regiment. When we got to the muddy area my guys got out and began to tackle it with gusto since they had been bored to tears sitting around that small village all day. We got back to the harbour area about the same time as my squadron commander returned from the CO's O group. He advised me that he was to tell me off about my voice procedure and then told me that I would have a large front end loader and driver from the Engineer Field Squadron arriving the next morning.

6643 Jim Kempling: Having completed my PhD in History a few years back, Barbara and I decided it was time for another adventure. Last month we moved to Galiano Island where I am currently working hard to do as little as possible.



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Professor in Leadership Updates

The following is an update provided by the new Class of 65 Professor in Leadership, Holly Ann Garnett.

I can provide a few updates, especially on the partnered research programme made possible by the Class of 1965 Chair. We have a cohort of ten students taking part in research projects in collaboration with civil society organizations, from RMC and other Canadian universities. This is the real centre of my programme of developing Leaders. Having students outside of RMC interact with the College, and having the RMC students exposed to outside organizations is mutually beneficial. I attach their projects below to give you a sense of what we are working on this academic year. Additionally, I continue working with Christian Leuprecht to finish writing and analysis for the Ex-Cadets survey project started as part of his tenure as chair. Christian and I are also planning a webinar series for the new year on Security and Society that will be of interest, but no dates concretely yet. These provide some nice continuity with the previous Chair's work.

Name	University	Partner Organization	Research Question
Ellie Hwang	RMC	Civix	Do Canadian youth exhibit the characteristics of 'democratic disengagement/disenchantment'?
Richard Sun	RMC	PCO - Democratic Institutions	How do foreign-language and English-language media compare in their coverage of political issues?
Sonya Pallapothu	McGill	Elections British Columbia	What predicts voting (or non-voting) in British Columbia? (Socio-demographic variables? Attitudes? Habit?)
Luis Sanchez Diaz	Calgary	Elections Ontario	How does media coverage (close to election day) impact voter turnout?
Rachel Moss	Ottawa	Apathy is Boring	How can campaign finance regulations be amended to foster a more egalitarian and inclusive model to encourage greater participation, among youth?
Matthew Howell	RMC	Canadian Parliamentary Center	How is the increasing insecurity (especially threats posed by Jihad, Wagner etc.) directly hindering the democratic process in West Africa (either one countries or a cross-national comparison)?
Katherine Li	Calgary	Elections Alberta	How can electoral management bodies better engage youth in the voting process?
George Legler	Nipissing	Samara Centre	What does it cost (broadly defined) to run as a candidate in multiple, provincial and federal elections in Canada?
Marguerite Lefebvre	Ottawa	Elections NS	What impacts have internet voting had on the democratic process in jurisdictions that have adopted it?
Angelique Busanga	Ottawa	Elections Nunavut	What have First Nations or indigenous groups globally done to address reconciliation / decolonization in the administration of elections? How could these changes be applied to elections in Nunavut?



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Another Letter

6559 Gerry Mueller: 2023 was the year of the medical jackpot – it is very rare that I am able to claim a medical/dental deduction on my income tax. A very rapid cataract growth made me marginal for driving, and given the very long wait times for cataract surgery in Ontario I opted to go for the private system (same ophthalmologist, but 2 months wait instead of 12-14 – and my optometrist, whom I have known since she was a teenager, tells me there are good reasons why some others have shorter waiting lists). Post surgery I needed my glasses redone, so all together the price of a decent cruise for two. Bonus however; I passed the vision test for my drivers licence renewal which otherwise I probably would have failed, and now no longer have a “Corrective lenses required” restriction on my licence. Add to those costs a higher than usual number of tooth filling failures and a root canal, and the government owed me a substantial sum.

I also had a recurrence of the bladder cancer that was first diagnosed in 1989, and which last recurred in 2000. Given that north of 2/3 of these recur I had a good more than 20 years run with only regular checkups. In 2023 my checkups started producing irregular results; no visual tumours but malignant cells found in cytology. Long story short, I was what a doctor once told me to avoid, medically interesting. It took some explorative/diagnostic surgery on October 31 (avoid that date for surgery if possible, unless you enjoy putting your health and possibly life into the hands of some very sketchily costumed people) for my urologist to tell me that I actually made sense (good to know at my age), yes my cancer had recurred, not in the bladder but prostate instead, not prostate cancer (which a lot of you are probably familiar with as it goes with being male and living to our age) but bladder cancer in the prostate. A very thorough TURP (if you don't know experientially what that is, congratulations!) in early January, some cytology tests, and a consult with an oncologist leave me with being back to pre-2023, probably ok with regular cystoscopies every 6 months or so.

And just to add to the fun, after 3 ½ years of avoiding COVID, June and I got it. I suspect I was the one that picked it up, probably during the 5 hours I was at RMC Kingston in September for Jim Caruthers's “installation” on the Wall of Honour and the preceding March to the Arch. From comments during the TEA event I gathered that the 2023 Reunion Weekend was a bit of a spreader event. In any case the Friday after June and I flew to Regina for a 10-day family visit (which was to take place in parts (Regina, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Biggar and Saskatoon). By Sunday nigh in Moose Jaw I was feeling unwell enough that we decided to get back to a familiar medical system rather than see how SK's worked, and so were back home by Monday. Tested positive on Tuesday (June on Wednesday) and we quickly started the Paxlovid regime and made a good recovery. We also waited the minimum time to get shot #7 in December, and are not far from #8 (except the ON system seems to be short of vaccine at the moment). We are planning on trying for that Saskatchewan trip again, just as soon as the weather here and there is reliably past winter.

And hoping that 2024 turns out to be medically less interesting. Frankly, the tax refund was not worth it. Also hoping to meet up with many of you in September 2025, in Kingston!



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Closing Notes

Thanks to all for your contributions. To lend a bit of colour to Peter Jackson's tale of cleaning up after Army maneuvers and, specifically, the difficulty of moving large vehicles through tight corners in small villages, the picture below is a Centurion Bridge Layer with its bridge partially deployed.

