

# Class of 65 Newsletter

## Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

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*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

Happy New Year everyone. This will be a bit of a hodge podge of articles since Janet and I are off on a two week Caribbean cruise tomorrow and I wanted to clear my inbox before we got away.

6716 Lionel Hervieux

**6401 Claude Belhumeur** passed along the following sad news of the passing of classmate **6716 Lionel Hervieux**: Je t'informe aussi du décès de 6716 Lionel Hervieux, le 14 août 2024, c'était un B.A. de Maisonneuve, ingénieur école Polytechnique de Montréal 1966.

Il a fait carrière à la Société de transport de Montréal, notamment comme directeur Planification et services techniques.. Il assistait régulièrement aux dîners des anciens classe 1965 de la région de Montréal.

<https://www.urgelbourg.com/avis-de-deces/75785-lionel-hervieux/>

### 6601 Ernie Cable Awarded the King Charles Coronation Medal

On a happier note Ernie Cable has been awarded the King Charles Coronation Medal. The following is Ernie's description of the circumstance leading to this honour.

"I was nominated for the King Charles III Coronation Medal by the Maritime Air Veterans Association (MAVA) of which I have been an executive member and historian for many years. I was presented with the medal by our MAVA President, Paul Baiden, at our semi-formal fall luncheon at the Ramada Inn on the Rideau last November. Paul is also a long-time member of the Shearwater Aviation Museum, Naval Association of Canada, and the Canadian Naval Air Group.

Distribution of the Canadian King Charles III Coronation Medal is administered by the Chancellery of Honours at Rideau Hall. The Canadian Coronation Medal is the first Coronation medal minted in Canada and differs slightly from those in Britain and Commonwealth countries which designed their own. A total of 30,000 medals was produced in Canada, of which 4,000 were designated for the Canadian Armed Forces. The Department of Veterans Affairs was



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### Medal (Concluded)

initially allotted 175 medals with the Department's National Committee of Veterans Affairs selecting the 175 recipients from among Canada's 70 veteran organizations, of which MAVA is a member. I was fortunate to be one of the 175 selected for my 30 plus years of volunteer work on the Board of Directors and historian at the Shearwater Aviation Museum as well as for my years of historical research and published articles on Canada's naval and maritime aviation heritage. Subsequent to my selection, Veterans Affairs was allotted a further 80 medals to be distributed to 80 additional veteran recipients.

Interesting facts:

According to the 2021 census there are 461,240 veterans in Canada.

The Canadian Legion is Canada's largest Veterans organization with 232,359 members."

**BRAVO ZULU Ernie**

### Naval Tid Bits

**Gail Carruthers and 6560 Andrew Nellestyn** provided the following links that may be of interest to those of you of the Senior Service and/or simply interested in naval affairs.

From Gail on a proposed restructuring of the Royal Canadian Navy:

[https://www.cgai.ca/redesigning\\_the\\_royal\\_canadian\\_navy\\_for\\_a\\_more\\_dangerous\\_world](https://www.cgai.ca/redesigning_the_royal_canadian_navy_for_a_more_dangerous_world)

From Andy on a current submarine class:

<https://www.19fortyfive.com/2025/01/the-astute-class-submarine-might-be-the-best-on-earth-not-in-u-s-navy/>

### Letters

**6599 Gerry Mueller:** If this catches you while cruising the Eastern Caribbean, I hope it is everything you hoped for; if before or after, suitably amended wishes. Although quoting my late friend, the Rev'd Paul Kett, with my hearty assent, "If I never see Charlotte Amalie again it will be too soon!"

It's high time I caught you and classmates up on my recent times, and also chime in on some of the issues raised in recent Newsletters.

2024 wasn't the greatest of years, health wise. I became "medically interesting" to quote one of my doctors, and that is not a good thing! Several exploratory procedures followed, some of them surgical for which anesthesia was required; fortunately, spinal blocks were an option, as it is far less debilitating subsequently. In the end a very persistent and clever specialist figured out what the problem was, or as he told me, "you finally make sense", which at my age is good to hear. Another surgical procedure appears to have been successful, and a check-up late in the year seems to indicate that I am back to a "watchful waiting" category. Unfortunately, later in the year that persistent and clever



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specialist and his wife who is also a physician moved to BC, partially for family reasons but also because they had gotten tired of spending much of their time on the bureaucratic work that the Ontario system demands of physicians who would rather be doing medicine or having a life. Fortunately, I was referred to another doctor with whom I'm impressed, and who is young enough he will probably outlive me!

The cherry on the 2024 health cake was another bout of COVID in October, mostly likely caught at a funeral! Because of all the other medical work I think I might have been more immuno-compromised than I knew, as my wife who was also at that funeral never got sick. I tested positive early enough that I was able to go on the Paxlovid protocol, and most of the symptoms went away quickly and I tested negative after a week. But it was probably the new variant that appeared last Fall that I caught, as long after all obvious symptoms had gone, I tired very quickly after even very moderate effort and was very low energy. Even now I tire more easily than I like. But I know enough about "regression to the mean" to hope that after a bad last year, this year will be such that on average both years will be average.

On to some comments about a 60<sup>th</sup> reunion this year. I am very much in favour of a reunion as part of the reunion weekend at the College, even if the participation of ex-Cadets is at the very least being neglected by the College organizers. But if we can't get a significant fraction of the living members of the class to commit to that, for whatever reason, a smaller gathering in person around the TEA Lecture is probably the best alternative. However, the timing such an event might be important, as driving to Kingston in the Winter (or even if there is a possibility of snowy weather) is not my idea of a good time; I've white-knuckled that trip a number of times in the past, when I supervised graduate students both in Waterloo and Montreal, and have no desire to add one more such experience. Also, while my wife June would probably come to a full reunion weekend with its opportunities for socializing, she would likely not be interested in a meeting of a few "old farts".

If it is decided to go for the TEA option, might I offer a suggestion for a possible venue. Over the years I have stayed numerous times at the Queen's University Donald Gordon Hotel and Conference Centre [<https://www.queensu.ca/donaldgordoncentre/>]. The rooms are every bit as good, if not better, than the downtown hotels, the price is not cheap but better than downtown, they offer a full menu breakfast as part of the deal, they have an on the property pub that is opened for groups of sufficient but moderate size in the evenings, and they have conference rooms. The only downside is they are at the western end of Queens, and so a long way from the College.

And finally, on the question of "suitable" material for a newsletter of this kind, specifically political matters. I have no problems with others' political opinions, and as many of the Class have spent their working lives in military and public service, I value hearing opinions other than mine. (I subscribe to a few online publications and bloggers that I often disagree with but find it one way of avoiding becoming part of an "always right" hive mind. ) But there do need to be some guardrails and limits; for me the primary one is that *ad hominem* arguments are never acceptable, first party (denigrating the other who has stated an opinion) or third party (denigrating a public figure being discussed). Beyond that, it is important to distinguish facts (citation needed) from personal statements (which might be preceded by "in my [possibly humble] opinion" or "I think"). All of that said, we need to keep in mind that those we disagree with are humans just like us and deserve the same respect we wish for ourselves. Disagreement is quite ok, being disagreeable is not! So, in reply to 6602 Jim Cale, I vote a limited YES! (That leaves open the question of who enforces/applies the limits: for me, I would be quite happy to let the Editor return questionable matter to the author for revision or not



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### Letters (Concluded)

publish it altogether if no revision is forthcoming.)

Mike, thank you for continuing to edit this Newsletter; I for one value it and look forward to it. As for what gets in and what gets out, I suspect that you do not enjoy the carping that sometimes results for a particular item that you included. But one last quote, this one from a wise old priest to me a long time ago when I was a young green priest, "If you try to please everyone, somebody won't like it!"

**6410 Claude Belhumeur:** Je te souhaite ainsi qu'à Janet, de Joyeuses Fêtes et de belles croisières. Notre dernière croisière, Monique et moi, c'était dans le golfe St-Laurent, de Rimouski à Blanc-Sablon sur le Bella Desgagnés.

La côte nord du St-Laurent est majestueuse. <https://relaisnordik.com/le-bella-desgagnes/>





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### A Broken Country by 6533 J.G. Forbes

Did you know that you live in a broken country? That's what so many people are telling you. The leader of the opposition certainly tells you. Donald Trump certainly believes it. Many newspaper columnists tell you almost every day. That we must be in so much trouble it is amazing that so many people go about their daily business every day.

There is no question that we have challenges ("There are no problems, there are only challenges").

We have a challenge in our federal parliament right now, but our constitution will lead us through that eventually. In fact, the process, awkward as it may seem, has already started. There will be a new leader of the ruling party and there will be an election before summer.

Speaking of which, why does it take so long to get a new party leader? Imagine Britain in May/June 1940. Subjugation by Nazi Germany seemed imminent. The British Prime Minister had lost the confidence of his own ruling party. He had to be replaced (sound familiar). Now imagine if the British Conservative Party had had to undergo a leadership race that lasted 90 or more days. Britain would probably have been defeated, or had agreed to peace talks with Herr Hitler, before a new Prime Minister had been elected. Instead, the cabinet and caucus made their own decision, and Winston Churchill became the new Prime Minister in a couple of days. He went on to become one of the great wartime leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He remained popular and supported throughout the war years. And when an election was held after the defeat of Germany, Churchill fully accepted the will of the electorate and peacefully turned over the government to the Labour Party.

A Prime Minister primarily needs the confidence and support of those she/he will lead in parliament. Without their support, he/she cannot govern. So, why not let the parliamentarians select the person in who they would have the most confidence and trust. That would ensure that the leader would lead a dedicated team who are most supportive of her/his decisions and programs.

How could this process of selection work? Let's give it a two-to-three-week timeline. In the first week, those that wish to apply for the position of the leader of their party would declare themselves. That could include outside persons, for example Mark Carney, to also join the race. After that week, each candidate would give a speech to their caucus outlining what their platform would be and why they think they are the ones to carry it out. After that, each caucus member would be given one week to come to their conclusion about who they would most likely follow. They could use that week to talk further with each candidate, consult with their own constituents and local party apparatus, or pray. At the end of that period, there would be a selection meeting of the caucus but without the presence of the declared candidates. The selection meeting would try to whittle down the candidates to one person whom a large consensus of caucus members would support. At the end of that meeting, the caucus chairperson would announce the new party leader. There you go. No need for huge, expensive proceedings and the inevitable round of fund raising. Very little time for foreign interference. If a process such as that were started this past Monday, you could have a new Prime Minister, one with the full backing of the caucus, by the time the new US president is inaugurated. The next election would be the time for the population to pass judgement on whether the caucus had made the wisest decision.



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### A Broken Country (Concluded)

These days, we think that every citizen, or at least they themselves, should have a voice in every government decision. The citizens of ancient Athens tried that. But that was one city with only a few hundred males who were considered citizens. That would be totally unwieldy today. That is why representative government was instituted hundreds of years ago. To have elected a riding representative, you have to trust that person to do their best for you. In addition, you have to trust that person to make the decision of who should lead their party in government, whether it be as Prime Minister or as an opposition leader. This process would, inevitably, allow every caucus member to have more influence in the running of parliament. That can't be a bad thing.

And no, we are not a broken country or a failed state. We are vibrant, intelligent, beautiful, industrious country with a good constitution and charter of rights and freedoms. Believe in it and do everything you can to support it.

### Class Reunion

Despite a limited amount of input and expressions of interest, our Class Secretary, **Hugh Spence**, continues his efforts to create the wherewithal for a successful 60th Anniversary this September. A block of rooms at a Kingston Hotel has been arranged. Negotiations for a reservation at the Senior Staff Mess for a Meet and Greet continue. It should be noted that the costs of the Legacy Dinner and the Old Brigade Dinner have risen steeply.

All this in the face of a rather sparse response from classmates on their intentions. The picture is further clouded by suggestions for alternate get togethers—either in conjunction with the annual TEA award, or as separate regional gatherings.

A core group is currently trying to weigh the pros and cons of all of these options. Their efforts would be greatly assisted by suggestions and/or confirmation of intentions from the silent majority.

### Closing Notes

That's it for this month. I'm looking forward to a brief break from winter and hope to return in a couple of weeks nicely tanned and fully invigorated. I hope that those of you interested in attending a reunion event in Kingston will keep Hugh Spence informed of your intentions and ideas, whereas, those contemplating some other means of celebrating our collective passage of time should consider passing along your thoughts to myself or Charles Emond.