

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

Time to put pen to paper again. Our Class secretary, **6439 Hugh Spence**, has some thoughts on a new policy regarding, among other things, Class Secretaries. **6533 Gord Forbes** has once again provided some thought provoking comments on a number of current issues. There are also a number of personal comments from several classmates, but first we must note the passing of another member of the Class of 65.

6411 Raymond Martin (1943-2025)

The following is an extract from Raymond's obituary.



Dr. Raymond Andrew Martin, 82, of Amarillo, Texas passed away August 26, 2025 following a long battle with colon cancer.

He was born January 19, 1943 in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada.

Ray earned his BA from the University of Western Ontario in 1965, his MD from University of Galway, Ireland, in 1970 and later completed an anesthesiology residency at the University of Toronto.

In 1977, Ray and Victoria moved to Houston, Texas where they both practiced anesthesia before calling Amarillo "home" in 1986.

While in his 50's he briefly attended law school and then completed a psychiatry residency at Texas Tech University in Lubbock where he practiced psychiatry before retiring in 2003.

Ray lived a vibrant life as a physician, friend and husband. Above all, Ray was deeply proud of his Irish heritage and carried it with him throughout his life. The Irish love the eccentric – and Ray was certainly that. Wherever he went, Ray brought the fun. He thrived in social gatherings with his Irish charm and witty conversations, and he took great delight in his bargain hunting adventures meeting many people along the way. He was known to have snagged some real treasures in his time.



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6411 Raymond Martin (concluded)

Ray is preceded in death by his parents Joseph and Helen Martin of St. Catharines. Ray leaves behind his beloved wife, Dr. Victoria Thompson of Amarillo, and his nephews: Kenneth Bond of Vero Beach, Florida, Robert Bond (Dr. Susan DVM) of Rochester New York and Colin Bond (Lyn) of Maui, Hawaii.

The Class of 65 extends it deepest condolences to the Martin family.

Out with the old, in with the ridiculous

By 6439 Hugh Spence, Major de class, RMC 1965

Well, it's all over now, but we had a pretty fine 60th-year reunion at RMC in September, probably and sadly our last as an organized group but nonetheless a memorable occasion.

Most of us noticed some major changes at the old Kingston college since "our day", and a fair bit of grumbling about that was heard. But things like the much abbreviated March to the Arch were appreciated by our now senior and less ambulatory selves. (Tip of the Pillbox and a Bravo Zulu to our Black Watcher Phil Bury who kindly acted as marker for the Old Brigade #1 Squadron in the Arch March.)

Though it's not directly connected to the Reunion weekend, I have to advise as your Class Secretary that the RMC Alumni Association (RMCAA, formerly the Ex-Cadet Club) has entered a new era of bureaucratic butt-protection, and may I say, silliness. This may amuse, or more likely bemuse you.

Some of you may recall that not long ago there was a minor security-related news item that referenced the fact that RMC college numbers were somehow so personal and privileged that they should be classified, and withheld from circulation except under special circumstances. They were equated with bank account numbers and credit card access codes, also SIN numbers, and it was argued they should be "protected". Think of that: your college number being declared secret by fiat!

Sheesh...apart from a simple way to personally identify things like text books, jock straps and uniform equipment, for over a century these numbers were famously queried and compared here and there around the world to determine how many beers you owed the RMC senior you'd just met! (College numbers are in the many thousands now, so that tradition has long gone. More's the pity.)

I mention this bureaucratic idiocy because I've been presented with another of somewhat greater import, though it appears to be related to a strange corporate sensitivity at RMC that never existed previously as far as I know.

The RMCAA. wants me as a Class Secretary to sign up as a sort of employee. Lackey might be a better word, if you read the not-so-fine print.



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Out with the old (Concluded)

Now, I was “elected” Class Secretary for Life by my classmates in 1975 on the occasion of our first reunion at the College. That I happened to live in Kingston at the time was perhaps a deciding factor. But I digress...

As the Class Secretary on record, I was recently sent two official looking documents from the RMCAA: “Terms of Reference Class Secretary” and “Consent to Appointment”. Until I’d read through this gibberish, I thought it was pretty neat that I now had a new French title, “Major de class”!

Well, Major or not, I cannot abide by what the Alumni now formally requires of a Class Secretary, for which some strange highlights from the two documents include:

- a Class Secretary must be appointed by the Alumni Association CEO and agree to a number of rules and restrictions governing things like responsibilities, authority, accountability, remuneration (really?) and reporting. Also, a sort of Trumpism: “Ensure all class events and activities are operated in a manner consistent with the goals and mission of the RMCAA.”

- le Major de class must sign the “Consent to Appointment” which among other things binds him to the Alumni Association HR Policy Guide, specifies a considerable number of duties, and only allows disclosure of information related to those duties if required by law!

So, I hereby proudly announce that I have no intention of relinquishing my long held position of Secretary of the Class of 65, but if anyone wishes to relieve me, I’d be happy to send them the forms required to join the RMCAA bureaucracy.

Not having signed up myself, I guess I shouldn’t really sign off as Major de class!

Letters

Bonnie Chiasson: Hi Mike - Sorry you and Jan didn't make it to the reunion. The parade showed the integration of many cultures at RMC. There are 40 students of South Korean background and some of them are tiny women. A lady, whose card stated she was Chair of Culture Evolution, said South Koreans have positive feelings about the military. South Korean is the 3rd most used language among the cadets. Times change!

Hope all is well with you and Jan.

Editor: Thanks Bonnie. An interesting observation on the cultural and linguistic changes at RMC. Janet sends her regards to you and Roger. Many fond memories of our times together in the early days in Halifax following graduation.



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Letters (Continued)

6602 Jim Cale: I have attached pictures of our classmates and partners at the OB Dinner. I have also attached the Toast to The Future proposed by the current CWC. I think it is worthy of publishing in our newsletter.

Toast to the Future

I'm Gina Ge (I'm not saying my student number again, in the case someone catches on and I have to buy drinks). It's a true honour to stand here tonight on behalf of the graduating class and to raise a toast to the future.

This College means a great deal to me, as I'm sure it means a great deal to you all too. It is not just where we study, train, and live...it's where we discover what we're truly capable of. And while many things have changed, the routines, the technology, even the faces, the spirit of this place has not. The grit, the determination, the fighting spirit that shaped you continues to shape us. That is what makes RMC timeless.

To the Alumni and the Old Brigade, thank you. You have carried the lessons, the values, and the spirit of RMC into your lives and careers. And you've given back to us, through your support, your mentorship, and by showing us what it truly means to live a life of service and dedication.

But here's the truth: we need you. We need your guidance, your stories, and your example to help us learn and grow into the leaders Canada needs. And in turn, you need us. You need us to carry the torch forward, to face the challenges the world has in store, and to keep the legacy alive. We may not look the same as the cadets of fifty years ago, but we fight the same fight: to serve Canada with courage, honour, and determination.

So tonight, let's raise our glasses. To the Old Brigade, for leading the way. To the graduating class, for taking up the challenge. And to the Royal Military College of Canada, whose spirit endures through every generation.

To the future! Au futur!



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Letters (Concluded)



?, 6539 Hilliard, 6183 Hogan, ?



6396 MacKinnon, 6639 Kakubow, 6598 Brown, 6602 Cale, ?



6541 Holman, 6508 Adams, 6475 Houghton, 6523 Colfer



6362 Jackson, 6559 Mueller, 6496 Emond, H24263 Cowan

My apologies to those of you I did not recognise (?) and to the ladies that I did not acknowledge.



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Uncomfortable Thoughts

By 6533 Gord Forbes

Aging

There are various stages of aging. You start by being a retiree. Then you become a senior citizen. From there you just become old. Then an octogenarian. And finally, you become a drain on the health care system. If you are lucky, you then become honoured because you are over 100 years old. We all know what follows. But the truth of the matter is that we get older one year at a time, just like everyone else in the world. A lot of younger people use the fact that you get old almost as an accusation, as if we had a choice and did it deliberately just so we could draw old age pension and challenge the health care system. It can make us senior citizens feel guilty, almost apologetic. Sorry folks. I didn't ask to get old, I just accumulated years, one at a time.

Taxes

One minute you are trashing the government because of the huge (sic) deficits and debt almost every government is running. Later you demand that taxes must be lowered. Then you are praising, to your American friends, the great social programs we have in this country. Then we tell ourselves that the health care system is not working, and more money must be directed towards it. Does anyone else see the disconnect in all this? You cannot reduce the deficit and lower taxes and still maintain all of our social programs. Do away with the health care system? Yes, it would take a big bite out of the deficit. Then we could go to the American system where only the well off can afford reasonable health care. Download more to the provinces? Then your federal taxes will go down, but your provincial taxes will balloon. The biggest discretionary program in the federal budget is national defence and the Coast Guard. If that is cut, who is going to protect us? There are no easy answers here. As was proven in the 1980s, trickle down economics do not work.

Antisemitism

Antisemitism seems to be increasing, particularly because of the Israeli war in Gaza. We automatically equate Israel with all Jews. But not all Jews are Israeli and even within Israel, not all of the people supported the war. The intensity of the war in Gaza is a political operation. It was (we hope 'was' is the right way of referring to it now) done by the government of Israel. Part of the reason for prolonging it is to protect the Israeli Prime Minister from criminal charges which had been brought against him before this war began. As long as there was a war, the charges were held in abeyance. It will be interesting to see what happens next. So, to hold all Jews guilty is wrong. Remember, it was a political operation, not a religious one.



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Closing Notes

A small commercial if you will permit. I volunteer with the Friends of the Canadian War Museum (FCWM) and am currently employed in the FCWM Bookroom. This is a large collection of donated used military non-fiction history books that are on sale every day the War Museum is open. It is one of the largest collection of this genre in the National Capital region and is a low priced cornucopia of military history from ancient times to the present. I invite you to drop in to either donate or to buy. The money we make (almost \$50K last year) plays a major part in the annual FCWM contribution to the Museum. Directions to the Bookroom are marked by a couple of well-placed banners and a sandwich board in the main concourse. We are open from about 0900 to about 1600 every day. As volunteers, we may not all adhere slavishly to those hours but they are a reasonable guideline.

Janet and I are pretty active during the non-winter months, however, having decided not to travel south this winter, and with golf and tennis seasons coming to an end, we have been looking around at activities to occupy our time during the winter. Volunteerism is one way of passing the time gainfully. We are both member of the FCWM and have just signed up for PROBUS, an organisation of primarily retired business people that hosts monthly meetings with guest speakers and which sponsors a variety of trips and visits to local points of interest. It is also proving to be a forum in which to meet a wide variety of interesting people.

I think it would be interesting, and perhaps helpful if some of you might consider sharing how you pass your time in retirement.

Looking forward to hearing from you. Can anyone identify the significance of this ship?

