

Class of 65 Newsletter

Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

Edition/Édition 80



January/janvier 2015

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 to everyone, although sadly, we must close out the old year with some sad news as we lost another classmate, **Ashley Waigh**, as reported below.

Gord (Navy) Forbes provides some information on a school trip that he and Denee chaperoned to Greece.

We will provide Part 1 of a two part series on the **Running's** latest adventure in Australia.

This Edition also contains the final episode of **Gerry Mueller's** Cuban saga.

Gaetan Dextras reports on a book he recently read and enjoyed.

Please turn your attention to the urgent reminder from **Gerry Mueller** for inputs into his offer to produce a Class booklet for the upcoming reunion, something that would provide a lasting memory of the event.

Finally, **Ed Sanford** remains in hospital battling serious illness and I am sure you will all join in wishing Ed our very best for a speedy recovery.

6444 Ashley Waigh (1940-2014)



Ashley Waigh passed away peacefully on 30 December 2014 at the age of 74. He leaves behind his wife Ora, two sons, one daughter and four grandchildren.

Ashley attended CMR St Jean. Many of us lost con-

tact with him after leaving CMR so it was a distinct pleasure for me to make his acquaintance once more at the joint Ottawa/Montreal lunch organised last June in Hawkesbury by **Laurent Lord**.

The funeral service was held at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Kanata, ON, 5 January. **Bill Leach, Charlie Emond** and **Mike Braham** were on hand to bid Ashley a sad farewell from the Class of 65.



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A Book I Enjoyed by 6332 Gaetan Dextras



I just finished reading another good book "Mon Afghanistan" written by 20175 Steve Jourdain (entered CMR in 1991, graduated from RMC in 1996). This is his chronicle of a 7-month period in

2009 when, as a Major at the time, he led C COY, 2 R22R in Afghanistan, in the Sperwan Ghar FOB near Kandahar. This book is in French, however I'm sure some of our English classmates will be able to read it. The book is really well written – I read it as fast as a thriller novel.

Some of you may have read Ray Wiss' books "FOB Doctor" and "A Line in the Sand". As described in the second book, Wiss was at the Sperwan Ghar FOB at the same time as Jourdain and describes him very positively. In fact, the two are friends and Wiss reviewed Jourdain's book before publication

"Mon Afghanistan" is available at Chapters/Indigo (see link below) as well as Renaud-Bray and Librairie Citation.

<http://www.chapters.indigo.ca/home/search/?keywords=mon%20afghanistan>

Je viens de finir un autre bon livre : « *Mon Afghanistan* » écrit par 20175 Steve Jourdain (entré au CMR en 1991, gradué de RMC en 1996). C'est sa chronique d'une période de 7 mois en 2009, alors qu'en tant que major à ce moment, il a mené la Compagnie C du GT 2^e Bataillon du R22R en Afghanistan, dans la base de patrouille Sperwan Ghar près de Kandahar. Ce livre est en français. Il est très bien écrit – je l'ai lu aussi vite qu'un roman d'action.

Certains parmi vous ont peut-être lu les livres de Ray Wiss "FOB Doctor" et "A Line in the Sand". Tel que décrit dans le 2^e livre, Wiss était à la base de patrouille Sperwan Ghar en même temps que Jourdain et le décrit très positivement. En fait, les deux sont amis et Wiss a revu le livre de Jourdain avant sa publication.

« *Mon Afghanistan* » est disponible chez Chapters/Indigo (voir lien ci-dessus) ainsi que chez Renaud-Bray et Librairie Citation.





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This Man in Havana—**Cuba in the 1970's (Part 4)**

By 6559 Gerry Mueller



A note on Cuban marital standards; at that time, maybe even now, they were remarkably puritanical, even by Canadian 1970's standards! You wanted sex, you got married! You were married, no sex with other than your spouse. And so a Canadian and a Cuban, both married, was a total scandal. On the other hand, divorce in Cuba, unlike Canada,

was quite simple. One of, or both of, a couple filled out a form requesting a divorce; if both filed they needed no reason, if only one there had to be a reason, which could be as simple as "I'm bored", and the divorce arrived, on a postcard, in about 4 weeks. On the other hand, if there were children of the marriage, both parents were responsible for their wellbeing until they were adults, no ifs ands or buts. And wives could apply to a court to have their husbands compelled, by fines, to do an equal share of the household chores!

Another incident was a couple of Canadian professors, out for an evening on the town, getting lost in the Vedado district of Havana. All but the oldest part of Havana is laid out on a grid, street names are numbers, avenues run one way, streets the other, houses are numbered sequentially from the lower numbered intersection. In theory, an address tells you exactly which block it is located in. But, there is also a one way system, which means Havaneros tell you to get anywhere you have to go in circles. Eventually these two guys found themselves at an intersection with every direction one way, the wrong way. One of them told me they basically flipped a coin (he's a statistician) to decide which wrong way street to take. At the end of which they found themselves in a courtyard, surrounded by soldiers, with assault rifles. They insist they

were treated very politely; also it was clear they were not going anywhere. The soldiers spoke no English, they spoke no Spanish; the only ID they had were Canadian driver's licences. Eventually an officer arrived who spoke very good English, who got their story, made a phone call, and came back and apologized for the inconvenience, but that the one way wrong way streets were there to stop uninvited people from coming to this particular courtyard, which happened to be part of the property of Fidel Castro's mistress's home, and Fidel happened to be in residence. Then he invited them to come and have a drink with him. They declined, somewhat shaken, so a couple of soldiers and a car were tasked with leading them out to where they could navigate on their own.

Not actually in Cuba, but in transit, I had one very interesting experience in Mexico City. Because of the long time it took to ship or mail anything to Cuba, or back, most of us participating became mules when travelling back and forth to Cuba. Most often it was just mail going back and forth, as that was faster than any other means. Sometimes it was small physical parts, needed for research or equipment repairs, even VW car parts, but stuff that could be put into a suitcase. But on one trip I found myself transporting a mechanical IBM card punch, that was longer than my suitcase, and would have taken up about half of it. It was also fragile, so I carried it as a carry-on. Problem was, in Mexico it attracted customs attention, and as we were always scrupulous about carrying documentation about the value of what we were bringing to Cuba, I was told that if I wanted to have this thing with me in Mexico, it would cost me a bag-full of (non-refundable) pesos, or I could leave it in bond storage, and reclaim it when I left for Cuba. Door 2 was the obvious choice. On the day of my flight to Havana, I duly got to the airport early, did my check-



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This Man in Havana—**Cuba in the 1970's (Part 4) (Continued)**

in and then headed for the customs bond storage area to pick up my keyboard. Which I duly got handed, and then I was marched across the tarmac to the waiting Cuban flight, with a Mexican customs officer behind me, with a very large sub-machine gun! He followed me all the way up the stairs into the aircraft, and only then departed, while I found my seat, feeling the stares of the rest of the passengers on me, pondering just what sort of criminal I might be.

Travelling the Other Way. In the last two years of the CUSO-CUJA Project, Cuban student started coming to Canada, to work in the labs of professors with whom they had worked out a research project. Typically, they would come for 3, maximum 4 months. Sometimes they would be billeted with the professor supervising them (who would be paid room and board), but most often we would try to accommodate them in student residences. For practical purposes, only professors at the three primary universities participating (UBC, Toronto, Waterloo), would be able to supervise, because at other universities we would have no infrastructure in place to deal with their needs and problems. That also meant it fell to the coordinators to do the leg work. And for practical purposes, at Waterloo at least, because of co-op programmes, we had residence space in the Winter and Spring terms, a fair number of Cubans would come in January! I became adept at wheedling Winter clothes out of my colleagues.

One immediate worry however was simply getting Cubans here, and back. With flying through Mexico City, to Toronto or Vancouver, they would be overflying the United States. Whenever I had a group, coming up or going back, I would be fervently praying that the CP Air flight would not have a mechanical that would require landing in the U.S., because the Cubans would promptly be arrested as illegal aliens! And none of us knew how that would end! In the

event, that never happened.

I did have one adverse event. I picked up 5 Cubans coming to Waterloo one January evening at Toronto Pearson, having brought parkas and gloves for them, not all fitting well, and was driving back to Waterloo in a rented van, and a blizzard. Climbing the Niagara Escarpment on Hwy 401, I hit a frozen rut and went into the ditch like I was on rails. Well, I did have 5 able-bodied Cubans, who despite having never seen snow, let alone stood in it, managed to get the car pushed back onto the road, just as an O.P.P. cruiser showed up. Having sniffed my breath and decided I was sober, and having looked at the rut and agreed that I really couldn't have avoided the ditch, he then wondered who these guys in ill-fitting clothes and with bad English were. I'm not sure he really ever understood just what we were doing, but those were kinder, gentler days, and he sent us on our (uneventful) way. The Cubans were impressed, because there the traffic police, in the case of any accident, just arrest everyone in sight, and let a judge sort it out, eventually.

Putting Cuban graduate students, most of who were in their late twenties to middle thirties, married, often with families, into residences of mostly teens, lead to interesting "cultural exchange". Cubans were amazed at the prodigious amounts of beer Canadian students could consume, but, most of them being weaned on rum, could hold their own, which gained them points with the Canadians. And Canadian engineering students introduced Cubans to the sport of "boat racing", and in my last few times at CUJAE, there was some evidence that the sport was taking root there. I don't know if that has continued.

In the end, theses were submitted, passed by both Cuban and Canadian examiners, and Master's degrees were awarded, and CUJAE had a graduate program in engineering. That still continues.



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This Man in Havana – **Cuba in the 1970's (Part 4)** (Concluded)

Some Closing Thoughts. In many ways this was a unique project in its time, bringing together two very different economic and political systems, both with a commitment to quality education, and one partner committed to assisting the other, but letting that other direct the assistance. In the end, those of us who participated, on both sides, benefitted. For my part, some of what I earned went, very much later, into the design of a project which brings Canadian students to Mexico for a short but intense learning experience, about which I may write sometime down the road.

All of those participating, Canadians (which includes other nationalities who participated) and Cubans, learned from each other. Some Canadians taught a second, even third time in Cuba; friendships were formed, and even though these could not continue beyond the boundaries of the Project because of the difficulties, still, of communicating with Cuba, there are more than 100 Canadians who think more favourably of Cuba, and know more about it, than they would without having participated, and a generation of Cuban engineers with graduate degrees who think of Canada as a friend.

In 2004, over the New Year's holiday, I returned to Cuba as a tourist for the 1st time (I have been back several times more since). Before departing, I thought about who, of all the people I had worked with in the 70's, I might be able to find on the Internet. I decided it was the very intelligent young woman whom I had met on my 1st time in Havana, as the Head of the Department of Industrial Engineering. I googled her, with suitable parameters, and sure enough, she popped up as the Deputy Minister of Higher Education – Technology, with email address. So I wrote to her, and we agreed we would try to meet when I was in Cuba. That didn't happen; I was in Varadero, and all the hotels were full (and even a Deputy Minister does not trump the need for Cuba to earn hard currencies), but we spoke for over an hour by telephone,

catching up on what had happened to people we both knew, but also to tell me that she, and CUJAE, and Cuba, still remember and appreciate what we accomplished together back then.

Two years later, we were in Cuba at the same time as the meeting of the "Metropolitical Council for Cuba". Bear with me; the Episcopal Church of Cuba is technically a Province of the Episcopal Church of the United States, but for obvious reasons can't be. Instead, there is the above Council, chaired by the Primate (Head Bishop) of the Anglican Church of Canada, that governs the Cuban church, and meets there every so often. They happened to be meeting during a time when we were in Cuba, and the Canadian Primate happens to be a good friend. Sao, we were invited to a dinner in Varadero, hosted by the Primate, with the Canadian delegation, the Canadian ambassador (and her husband, who was also her driver and Military Attaché), and the Cuban minister responsible for Church relations. I happened to be seated near the ambassador and the Cuban minister, and in conversation with both, they noted that I seemed to be more knowledgeable about Cuba than the average. So I talked a bit about the CUSO-CUJAE Project. The ambassador said as far as she knew, no one at the Embassy had any idea that this project had happened.

Then, having discovered she and her husband were staying at the same hotel we were, she bundled us off to her car, her husband and my wife in front, she and I in back, with her data-mining my brain about the project. (It wasn't on my bucket list, but I've added it and ticked it: ride in the back of an embassy car, with the Canadian flag flying on the front fender.) In the end I asked if she knew the Deputy Minister of Higher Education – Technology and she said she sure did, and I suggested she talk to her about the Project, because the Cubans sure remembered, and remembered Canadian for good!



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Dinner for 191 by 6533 Gord (Navy) Forbes

This newsletter has featured a number of travelogues from classmates over the years, and they have proven very interesting to read. The one thing they have in common is that they all describe trips with one or more couples or small groups. But how about taking a trip with a party of 191? It sounds like a big party, right? Now what about a party that included 170 high school students? That was what my wife, Denee, and I did in March, 1994.



*Temple of Athena, Acropolis at Athens **

Our older son, Peter, had taken the school trip to Greece offered by his high school back in 1988 and came back with great stories and memories. So when the opportunity came up for our younger son, Andrew, to go, he jumped at the chance. The school had an information evening about nine months before the trip which we went to, only to find that there would be room for a few parents to tag along. We would not be chaperones or responsible for the school kids in any way, we would just have to pay our way at the same rate as a student. That definitely got us thinking. I had been to Athens briefly in 1987 on a business trip and that had been enough to whet my appetite. So after some discussion, Denee and I signed up with the apprehensive agreement of Andrew.

So on a cool morning the next March, we climbed onto busses at the high school for the trip to Mirabel Airport (remember that?). There we boarded an Alitalia

747 flight to Rome and subsequently on to Athens. The entire party, who came from four different high schools, flew on three different airlines. And so, 191 tourists; students, teachers and parents; landed at the Hotel Athena in the centre of Athens. This became our headquarters for the next several days as we explored Athens; the Acropolis (of course), the National Museum (great Greek exhibits), the 1896 Olympic Stadium and other sights. We then travelled to the Peloponnesus for visits to Corinth (Civil Engineers would salivate over the Corinth Canal), Mycenae and the most amazing Greek amphitheater at Epidaurus (or Epidavros as the Greeks pronounce it since they have no U in their vocabulary). The acoustics in the place were amazing. By standing at the centre of the facility, one could be heard perfectly in any part of the 5000 seat theater. One of the students, who possessed a beautiful singing voice, stood there and sang O Canada to the great pleasure of everyone, Canadian and otherwise.

One day we went on a trip by ferry to some of the islands south of Athens including Aegina, Poros and Hydra. Each of these islands is quite unique in character and geography, but quite alike when it comes to the hanging octopi and goats sold by the outdoor merchants. That part totally grossed out Denee.

We then took an overnight ferry to Rhodes, one of the most interesting places we visited. To start with, we stayed in a five star hotel who welcomed us because it was just before their tourist season and they used us to train their hotel staff for the year. Rhodes shows a mixture of the civilizations that have inhabited it. The Old Town of Rhodes is delineated by the medieval fortifications built by the Knights Hospitallers of St. John in the 14th century when they had been forced out of the Holy Land after the Crusades. The highlight of this place is the Palace of the Grand Master which, until after the Second World War, was the headquarters of the Italian Governors. One day we visited



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Dinner for 191 by 6533 Gord (Navy) Forbes (Continued)

Lindos on the islands east coast. Here you can see history through many centuries starting with the cave low on the sheer cliff which is reputed to be an ancient holy site dating from possibly the 10th century B.C. At the top of this cliff, the Greeks built there acropolis including a temple that was then under reconstruction. Surrounding this acropolis was another castle of the Knights of St. John. The only way to reach this place is by walking up several hundred steps from the very picturesque little town at the foot of the hill. Next to the town is a nice, protected beach where we spent the afternoon recovering from our morning exertions.



*The Crusader Fortress surrounding the Greek Acropolis at Lindos**

Back in Athens, we spent one afternoon in the Plaka, the old marketplace of small shops and sidewalk vendors situated right below the Acropolis. Haggling was the great fun here. Denee got jewellery and I got a Greek style chess set. Everyone came back with souvenirs of some sort or another and the vendors got rich for this day.

One the last day of our visit, we went by our trusty busses to visit Delphi, the “Navel of the Earth”, as the Greeks called it. And I must admit, it is one of the most beautiful and scenic places I have ever seen. It is built on a hillside on one side of a valley with a river that flows down to the Gulf of Corinth. The path winds its way from the parking lot up through the temples and treasuries ending in a stadium and amphitheatre. Delphi was a place where people from various

cities came to consult the Oracle of Delphi which was, in fact, a con game.



*Athenian Treasury at Delphi, built from the spoils of the battle of Marathon**



View from Delphi to the valley below

So what made this trip work so well?

Good organization was the first thing that comes to mind. Everything was well planned beforehand and went off pretty well without a glitch.

The guides that showed us around every day were the second success. The guides in Greece are professional and must pass difficult tests in Greek history and foreign language skills. Each day we had the same guide on the bus we were assigned so we got to know each other quite well. In Athens, our guide was Gina who



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Dinner for 191 by 6533 Gord (Navy) Forbes (concluded)

was university educated and very fluent in English. On Rhodes, our guide was named David and he had the most melodious voice you would want to hear. I could sit and listen to him for hours. Each of them offered interesting insights into ancient Greek life and history. For example, did you know that in one of the ancient games on Rhodes the biggest winner was crowned for rhetoric and was presented with 365 casks of olive oil for his efforts? Those guides kept the students enthralled throughout each day's outings.

Yeah, but still how do you control 170 high school students for twelve days on the road? The genius of the teachers came to the fore here. There was one simple rule. Any student who misbehaved was forced to make a collect call to their parents with the message that if the student misbehaved again, they would be

sent home on the first plane at their parents' expense. The teacher in charge said that in the seven previous trips he had organized, he had only had to send a student home once. There was, to my knowledge, no collect calls home on our trip. I don't know what the punishment was if any of the parents on the trip had misbehaved.

So 170 students, eleven teachers and ten parents had a wonderful, interesting and trouble free trip to Greece in the spring of 1994. As for me, I saw most of Greece in black and white through the viewfinder of a video camera. I only saw the colours when I saw the resulting tapes.

**Images Copyrighted by Historylink101.com (Their pictures are much better than mine)*

Drought, Fire and Flood or Wild Boars, Cassowarys and Cyclones (Part 1) by 6567 Gary Running

As some of you may be aware, my wife Moninna and I typically spend our winters in Australia. We were a little late leaving Canada this past winter, not arriving in Australia until early February, and staying until the end of April. Our centre of operations is our daughter and son in law's place just an hour south west of Sydney and from there we travel to various places through out Australia. The previous winter, one of the high lights for us was a motor cycle trip from Perth on the west coast back to Sydney on the east coast, across the Nullarbor Plain.

This past winter we again rented a motor cycle, this time in Melbourne, with the intention of crisscrossing back and forth through Australia's Great Dividing Range. The Great Dividing Range runs from the northern tip of Queensland southward all the way through Queensland, New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria. It parallels the eastern coast of Australia with a north south length of approximately 3,500 km and an east west width of from 160 to 300 km. In the north the elevations vary between 600 and 900 metres but in the southern part can go up to 1500 metres with the very highest point being 2,228 metres. Depending on where you are along its length it is also known by other names such as the Australian Alps, the Snowy Mountains, the Blue Mountains, the New England Ranges etc.

This past January parts of Queensland, NSW, and Victoria were in drought conditions and when Moninna and I arrived in Australia the drought had not yet broken and at numerous locations there were forest fires under way. Moninna and I flew from Sydney to Melbourne on the 18th of February to pick up our rental bike (a BMW R1200GS). We picked the bike up before noon and by then in was already well over 30 C in the shade.



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Drought, Fire and Flood or Wild Boars, Cassowarys and Cyclones (Part 1) (Continued) by 6567 Gary Running

We had the bike rented for 2 weeks and the plan was to head generally north going back and forth across the Great Dividing Range on secondary roads. If you like motor cycle riding you like very little traffic and lots of twisty turnys. In route planning, I used a book called the “Best 100 Motor Cycle Rides in Australia” (since updated to 150). Also used was an Australian government sponsored web site which gives current information on fires, floods, road closures etc. In two weeks we were not going to get to the northern tip of Queensland, but the plan was at least get to the NSW/Queensland border.



Day 1 – Leaving Melbourne

Day 1 saw us working our way out of Melbourne and heading north and east through agricultural land which was very hot and dry. We stopped for the night about 240 km from Melbourne at a town called Wangaratta which is a jumping off point to the Great Alpine Road which runs generally south east from Wangaratta across the Great Dividing Range until it hits the Pacific near Bairnsdale.

Day 2 was to be our first crossing of the Great Dividing Range. After breakfast it was already in the high twenties and as noted earlier, the day before temperatures had peaked in the mid 30's, so it was hard to convince yourself of the need to get ready for cool (cold?) weather. Less than an hour out of Wangaratta we left



Ski Lift – Mount Hotham

agricultural land behind and began to climb steeply, and within another half hour or so were at the top of Mt Hotham (peak elevation 1868 metres). The temperature was now just above 0 C, but not by much. We stopped for lunch (and to warm up) at a restaurant beside a ski lift whose main claim to fame is being the highest one in Australia. We then started down the Pacific side of the mountain, and looking east we could see smoke from the nearest forest fire some 10s of kms away. We reached the Pacific (Bass Strait) at Nowa Nowa and turned left towards Cann River where we stayed for the night. At this point the nearest forest fire was about 20 km to our north west.

Day 3's plan was to cross back over the Great Dividing Range through the heart of the Snowy Mountains. We headed north first through Bombala to Cooma. At the start of the day the closest forest fires were to our left (west) but by the time we reached Cooma and it was time for us to swing back west the closest fire was now safely to the south west. The day was windy and as we started to climb quite cool, but we had learned from yesterday's experience. Leaving Cooma we passed through Jindabyne and then to Thredbo Village where we stopped for lunch. Thredbo is one of Australia's premier ski resorts. Looking north from Thredbo we could see Mt. Kosciuszko. At 2228 metres it is the highest point in Australia. After Thredbo we headed back down the other side of the Range, and again the western side was by far the steeper. At the bottom of the mountain lies Khancoban where we stayed for the night. Khancoban is



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Drought, Fire and Flood or Wild Boars, Cassowarys and Cyclones (Part 1) (Continued) by 6567 Gary Running

more or less at the headwaters of the Murray River and there is a large dam nearby with associated reservoir and power generation as well as recreational activities.

Day 4 was to be a long day as we wanted to get back to Sydney for family commitments the following day. We left early in the morning with the sun still low in the sky. We were off the mountain now and in lovely rolling agricultural landscape with sheep in many of the fields and the road paved, but very narrow and very lightly used. Some times when you are motor cycling the conditions seem to be perfect and the experience is almost magical. This was one of those times; lovely secondary road, no traffic, beautiful scenery and perfect weather. The 94 km to Tumbarumba was an experience I often now reflect fondly back on. All things come to an end however. After a coffee break in Tumbarumba we made our way to Tumut, then joined the Hume Highway at Gundagai and made our way to Sydney on the throughway.

We spent that night and the next at Rachel and Tony's place (daughter and son-in-law). We gave the bike a rest for the day, and instead watched Rachel and her horse Red competing in a cross country event at the Sydney Olympic Equestrian Centre. That evening was a dinner in honour of Tony's dad Simeon's 70th birthday.

The following day it was back on the bike heading to the Blue Mountains which lie just to the west of Sydney. Starting at Windsor, a small town west of Sydney, is the Putty road which runs north through Yengo National Park and comes out towards the top end of the Hunter Valley at Singleton. The Hunter Valley is one of several well known wine producing areas in Australia. The Putty road is a marvelous motor cycle road, but in part because of its proximity to both Sydney and the Hunter Valley, it's best to avoid it on the weekends because there are hundreds of motor cyclists using it. That night's stop was at Singleton. Wine is not the only item produced in the Hunter Valley. That part of NSW also produces a lot of coal. The nearest port is called Newcastle. That evening on an after-dinner walk, we watched a huge coal train making its way to tide water. A new twist on the old expression "taking coal to Newcastle"? A huge chunk of Australia's GDP is the export of coal.

Day 7 saw us making our way north and east on secondary roads through very rural and varied terrain until we intercepted "Thunderbolts Way" at Gloucester. Thunderbolts Way runs more or less straight north through a part of northern NSW known as "New England". It lies on the western slope of the Great Dividing Range-very rural, quite scenic. Thunderbolts Way is named after Capt Thunderbolt the alias of Fredrick Ward, one of Australia's highway men. Ward is not the most famous of Australia's highway men, that distinction possibly rests with Ned Kelly, but Ward was one of the more successful, and had one of the longest careers, 1863 to 1870. We stopped riding on day 7 in Walcha, which lies on the intersection of Thunderbolts Way and the Oxley Hwy which runs east from Walcha through the Great Dividing Range to the Pacific at Port Macquarie.

Notwithstanding that the Walcha/Port Macquarie route is one of the better known motorcycle rides in NSW, on day 8 we decided to continue north on Thunderbolts Way through New England to the terminus of Thunderbolts Way near the NSW/Qsld border. However before continuing north we did take a side trip on the Oxley Hwy as far as Apsley Falls to have a look at it. Although by now the drought had ended, there was still very little flow over the falls. Heading north on Thunderbolts Way we went through Uralla, Inverell and then to Yetman, almost at the Queensland border. It was a good days ride through remote and scenic agricultural



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Drought, Fire and Flood or Wild Boars, Cassowarys and Cyclones (Part 1) (Continued) by 6567 Gary Running

landscape. We then swung west on the Bruxner Hwy to overnight in Goondiwindi situated right on the NSW/Qsld border on the Macintyre River (one of several rivers that collectively form the head waters of the Darling River). That evening we visited a small museum which in earlier years had been a customs house collecting tariffs on interstate trade which back then was often water borne.

This was the northern limit of our ride, so on day 9 we swung back south on a very small country road which was parallel to and about 80 km west of the road we had traveled the day before. The table land was a little flatter, the fields larger, almost all crops and very few sheep, cattle or horses. The first hour or two of each days ride is often my favorite, in part I guess because the temperatures are still cooler, and the sun is lower in the sky. Anyway, on this day, off to our left (east) a small crop dusting airplane was working. He was generally working in a north to south direction so we could watch what he was doing for quite a while. It brought to mind a Hitchcock movie from long ago where the hero and a crop dusting airplane interact in a Midwestern US cornfield, only this time the pilot was a friend, not an enemy. By coffee break we reached Warialda and turned left(east) on the Gydin Hwy towards Inverell and then Glen Innes where the days ride ended. Glen Innes is in the heart of Australia's "Celtic" Region and the Australian Standing Stones at Glen Innes are unique in the Southern Hemisphere.

The next day was devoted to another west to east crossing of the Great Dividing Range, this time from Glen Innes to Grafton on the World Heritage Hwy through the Gibraltar Range State Forest and National Park. The highest Peak on this route was Black Mountain at 1259m. Near the top of the route there was a lookout that gave panoramic views to the north and west. One could observe looking to the north a small remnant of what was millions of years ago, the southern extent of a tropical coastal rain forest. The southern extent is probably now more than 1,000km to the north. Coming down the eastern slope, we followed the Clarence River Valley all the way to Grafton. Although Grafton is not a tidal water, the Clarence is quite navigable all the way to the Coral Sea and there were a number of pleasure boats in evidence.



Black Mountain Heritage Highway

(To be concluded in the next edition)



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Urgent Reminder for Inputs to Reunion Booklet

You will recall several issues ago that **Gerry Mueller** offered to create a booklet of biographies and photographic memories from the upcoming reunion. He pointed out at the time that he needed 75 inputs to make this a worthwhile project. So far he has received less than twenty. Aside from being a very generous offer on his part, I think this would provide a lasting and memorable souvenir of the event and of classmates. I therefore exhort you to consider providing your information as requested below.

How to Contribute.

For photos (current and past):

- JPG files (scanned, attached to email, if they are from those days!)
- Please re-name them, using the pattern [College #] [First Name] [Last Name] – [Date & Short description].jpg
- In the body of the email add whatever other material you think relevant

For bio information:

- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or WordPerfect files, if at all possible, otherwise PDF or RTF; attached to email
- Name the files using the pattern [College #]

Closing Notes

Thanks to the “G Strings”, Gary, Gaetan, Gerry and Gord for taking care of this issue. I’ll be looking for another alphabetic combo to fill in future editions.

I’m hoping to be able to share more details on the forthcoming Reunion in subsequent newsletter and looking forward with anticipation to seeing many of you in October.

As a footnote to Gaetan’s book review, I would like

(First Name] [Last Name] – Biography.doc/
wpd/pdf

How to submit:

- Email to Gerry Mueller gerry.mueller@sympatico.ca
- Use Subject line : RMCC Class of 65: [anything else you think relevant]

Deadlines and Thresholds:

- Get it to me by March 31, 2015
- I will go ahead if we have 75 or more participants

Distribution Options:

- To be determined, but likely Net services like Dropbox; physical media on request

At the Reunion:

- My continuing hobby from before even RMC has been photography. So I will bring my gear, and take a lot of pictures, which I will distribute by the means above.
- Perhaps we can think about setting up a “photo booth”, and get pictures of all attending.

6559 Gerry Mueller

to point out that that book and hundreds of other used military history titles are available at unbeatable prices in the Friends of the Canadian War Museum Book Store located in the War Museum.

Finally, in addition to my usual plea for Newsletter inputs, I join Gerry in urging your inputs for his project.