

Class of 65 Newsletter

Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

Issue/Numéro 85



June/juin 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

With this edition, we enter our 8th year of production. It just seems like yesterday when my HMCS *Gatineau* colleagues coerced me into this venture. Nonetheless, it has been a good experience that has reconnected me to the Class and many old friends who I had let drift away with the passage of time. We'll start this issue with an important reminder from our *Secretary for Life* to respond to the letter requesting your intentions regarding reunion attendance and participation as soon as possible. **Gord Forbes** has made a proposal that I hope many of you will support - I certainly intend to do so - although his goal for completion by Reunion weekend might be a bit optimistic. A short article seeks your support for the new Class initiative for a Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning. After considerable cajoling, **Vil Auns** has provided a summary of his interesting life since many of us last saw him in 1965. Finally, yours truly provides a brief summary of the great cruise that Jan and I recently completed.

2015 REUNION REGISTRATION by 6439 Hugh Spence

PLEASE ACT NOW !

The 50th Anniversary Reunion notifications went out to 265-plus members of the Class in mid-May, and despite the fact that due to our superlative Class detectives' efforts* not one mailer has to date been returned due to a wrong postal address, so far the Registration forms are trickling in only slowly.

This is an appeal to hasten the returns. (For the e-mail addicted, check *Snailmail for Dummies* on the filling out of forms, sealing of envelopes, application of stamps and post box usage protocol.)

Your Reunion organizers urgently need to know numbers, event choices, names, what we need to buy and Mess facilities we need to book, staff we need to hire, available funds to pay for all that, *etc.* And we cannot wait until you finally favour us sometime during the summer (maybe) with an "OK, me too, I guess. Plus the old boot if she feels like it."

One thing for sure, non-Class run events like the Old Brigade Dinner on Saturday night may be oversubscribed this fall, so you gotta get in there ASP if you wish to attend. (Book through the RMC Club.)

But more important, for the Class, the potentially large attendance at our Friday night and Saturday noon events raise the spectre of having to assign "first come first served" numbers so we fit in with Fire Marshall requirements. Late registrants and folks who just show up at the door may have to be refused. We've never before had to do that.



Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 2

Reunion Registration (Continued)

So, bottom line, send in your Registration form and let us know you're coming (or not). Soonest, please. Definitely by **June 15** or you may be disappointed.

6439 Hugué
Secretary for Life
RMC Class of 65

* *Merci à nos Inspecteurs Détectives "Poirot, Clouseau et le gang": Georges Wilson, Doug Cope, Charlie Emond, Wayne McQuinn, Gaetan Dextras, Fats Carruthers. Bravo les gars.*

Proposal Request by 6533 Gord Forbes

As many of you know, I wrote a book, *We Are as One*, a few years ago. Since then I have done some casual writing, but have since been looking for another challenging project. The one I am proposing here could involve many of you, in fact as many of you who want to contribute.

You see, I would like to tackle a book about the Class of 1965. We really have a lot of interesting people and events in our class; some happy, some sad. I would like to capture the extraordinary character and history of our class while we can all remember what it was all about.

In that regard, I have two questions for you right now.

Would you consider such a book interesting and viable?

Would you contribute your own story to such a book?

I am not asking for any input right now, only answers to the above two questions. If you wish to answer the questions, please send me a short e-mail to hmcskootenav@gmail.com with your responses. Based on the results, I will then send out some general areas that would guide your inputs. Hopefully, we can have this project underway before the 50th Reunion where we can talk about it some more.



Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 3

Vil Auns - His Working Life by 6352 Vilnis Auns

Vil was born in Riga, Latvia on 15 June 1943, left with his family during the war in 1944 and lived in Sweden till 1948, then Ireland till the summer of 1949. Vil and his family finally arrived at Pier 21 in Halifax, N.S. on 9 Aug 1949 aboard the *MS Acquitania*. They finally settled in Montreal, P.Q. where he grew to puberty. He and his family became Canadian citizens in 1952.

Vil joined the Royal Canadian Navy in September 1960 and attended the College Militaire Royal de St. Jean from September 1960 till the summer of 1963. He received his commission as Sub-Lieutenant in May 1965, graduating from the Royal Military College of Canada with a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Electrical Engineering.



This was followed by the required training to qualify for operational watch-keeping duties at sea in *HMCS Qu'Appelle* and *HMCS Yukon*. Vil then attended the 10th Long Weapons Course in 1968, followed by Department Head and Weapons Officer duties in *HMCS Nipigon* and *HMCS Kootenay*, from Feb 1969 to Mar 1973. During this period, whilst on watch, Vil controlled the operations of these ships at sea in numerous national and international exercises. In addition, during February 1972, Vil received his official Command Qualification to Command Canadian surface warships.

In 1974 he was promoted to LCDR and was selected to attend the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, graduating in Dec 1976 with a Master of Science in Engineering Acoustics. Vil then assumed the duties of Executive Officer in *HMCS Assiniboine* until his posting to the Canadian Forces National Defence Headquarters in Feb 1979. Promoted to Commander in January 1980, Vil assumed the duties of Section Head, Surface Ship Weapon Systems and Sensors Requirements until June 1982, being responsible for defining their requirements and staffing their acquisition.

He was then selected to attend the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, graduating in June 1983. This was a graduate level curriculum on policy, operations and management. The intent was not only to learn about global issues but also to establish personal networking with other navies in the world. In Vil's case it was 35 navies. He still stays in touch with many of his old classmates today.

Vil assumed command of *HMCS Fraser* from Dec 1983 until Aug 1985 and truly enjoyed being with a great ship's company in various exercises at sea from the North Sea to the southern Caribbean.

This was followed by a posting to the position of Vice-Commandant of the Canadian Forces Fleet School in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In this capacity he administered and directed operations of an organization of 600 staff and the average student population of 1400.

In August 1988, Vil joined the Canadian Patrol Frigate (CPF) Project as the Operational Requirements Manager (ORM) for six years. He provided the CPF project office a Command perspective and determined/clarified operational priorities during contractor negotiations. Due to his extensive Combat System experience and knowledge, his major activity was to be personally involved to ensure that the CPF Combat Systems (CS) were in fact developed in accordance with the formal/contracted requirements. In 1992 he also assumed the duties of Senior Trials Director (STD) of the CPF CS Trials Program - overseeing all of the warfighting weapon and sensor Trials Directors, and personally ensuring that the CS was in fact properly integrated and



Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 4

Vil's Life (continued)

correctly controlled by the CPF Command and Control System (CCS).

Vil supervised the development of the major CS trials and their data collection plans; and directed those trial activities. He then led the PMO CPF technical deliberations to the solutions of trials arisings.

Vil also instituted and implemented the HALIFAX Class Weapon Certification program, which verified that each commissioned HALIFAX Class frigate and their Commissioning crew were trained and ready in all respects - prior to embarking and using live missiles and munitions for their trials program. He was given, by the Commander, Maritime Command, the exclusive Certification Authority for all CPFs/HALIFAX Class frigates - both those under the PMO CPF trials program and those that had become operational within Maritime Command.

In parallel, Vil initiated the development, monitored that development and then approved the initial HALIFAX Class Above Water CS Drill Procedures, which were used during the Trials program – and then were formally passed on to the Canadian Navy for operational use.

Leaving the CPF Project Office in 1994, Vil was posted to NDHQ as the Section Head in charge of Business Planning for DND's Department Information Services Organization (DISO) and was also in charge of staffing DND's Information Management Strategic Plan.

Vil retired from the RCN on 4 April 1995.

Two weeks later Vil joined Lockheed Martin Canada (then Unisys GSG) for his next 16 years of work that primarily focused on our Canadian Navy.

Vil was primarily employed as the Senior Advisor, Naval Combat Systems since joining Lockheed Martin Canada (LM Canada) in the Spring of 1995.

He was directly involved with DND/Canadian Navy engineers/operators to: plan for the future Combat Systems for the Canadian Navy; and lead the integration of the new Evolved SEASPARROW Missile (ESSM) into the HALIFAX Class CS.

Vil developed during 1997 to 2000, for the Canadian Navy, a Blueprint/Functional Model that detailed the required Functions of a modern Canadian Naval CS, along with its CCS and Information Management System (IMS). It provided descriptions of the perceived functionalities of the required CS Functions, along with the required inputs and output of each of the Functions. The operational requirements that are supported by the proposed CS were provided as a Requirements List.

During **2000 to 2009**, Vil primarily worked as the Senior System Engineer for the new advanced Vertical Launch Evolved SEASPARROW Missile (VLESSM) System integration into the HALIFAX Class frigates of the Canadian Navy. In that capacity he:

- led the development of the Performance and Compatibility Requirements (P&CR) Document (Requirements Document) for the VLESSM System and the project's Master Test Plan.
- attended numerous national and international meetings with the DND Project Manager (PM) ESSM as the VLESSM System expert. He provided guidance to DND/Navy staff on HALIFAX Class CS related matters and provided overall VLESSM System insight to the LM Canada integration team.
- provided system engineering support to the DND PM ESSM with respect to the integration of the



Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 5

Vil's Life (concluded)

Mk 73 Mod 3 CWI Solid State Transmitter (SSTX) into the HFX Class CS. This included leading the LM Canada team to develop the SSTX Trials Plan and Procedures that were executed for the acceptance of the SSTX into the Fleet.

- was very involved with Raytheon IDS engineers and the Canadian Navy/NDHQ engineers to plan the way ahead for the implementation and particularly the testing requirements of the Uplink capability (updating the ESSM in flight to the engaged target) for the ESSM fitted HFX Class frigates.

Vil retired from LM Canada 2 June 2011.

On a Personal Note

I met my bride, Faye, in Halifax and we were married in 1968. We were blessed with two children: Adrienne Lisa and Daniel Richard.

Adrienne married a treasure – Jason Vienneau – and they have been blessed with a wonderful little red-head daughter, Addison, who seems to know everything. Addison will be eight years old this fall. They live in Ottawa.

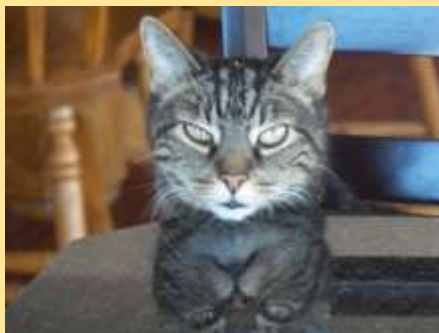
Dan married a sweetheart, Michelle Morrice, and they have been blessed with two sons: Nick and Dylan. Nick is eleven years old and Dylan is nine years old. Dan and Michelle seem to be living in their cars, driving the boys to rinks and soccer fields all over the Ottawa region. They also live in Ottawa.

Faye worked as a Registered Nurse for many years – when not taking the time off to properly raise our children. Her last ten years of employment was as a Medical Adjudicator for the Canadian Government – assessing the veracity of claims for government Medical Pensions.

Faye and I are both truly retired now. We downsized from our Ottawa home and in Dec 2013 have moved to a new condominium in Brockville, the Tall Ships Landing, which overlooks the St. Lawrence River and the 1000 Islands. Life goes on peacefully: we volunteer at stuff, we bike along the 1000 Island Parkway and yes, have an occasional brew from time to time.

We are both thankful to the Big Guy up there, for providing us the health to enjoy all of the above.

Life is great!!





Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 6

Our Mediterranean Cruise by 6364 Mike Braham

Several years ago, Jan and I got hooked on cruising. Our first was an Alaska cruise from Vancouver; then a cruise of the Baltic leaving from Copenhagen; and a third, from Athens, through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus for a circuit of the Black Sea. Our latest adventure was a Mediterranean passage starting in Venice and ending in Barcelona. For this one we took a step up in cruise lines and went with Oceana aboard one of their mid-sized ships, the *Riviera*.



This one almost didn't get off the ground. Two days before departure, I was greeting a busload of kids visiting the Diefenbunker where I volunteer and, while stepping off the bus, missed the last step and severely sprained my ankle.

X-Rays showed it was not broken, but nonetheless, I spent the entire cruise wearing an air cast (visible in picture) and carrying a cane.

We went a day early and spent an extra day in Venice, where we toured extensively on foot and by boat, taking in the many fascinating sights of this water-logged city.



Our next port of call was Zadar, Croatia. This was a pleasant, small town dominated by a large cathedral that had its beginnings in Roman times. Most place we went to on this cruise in fact seemed to have had ancient Roman roots. Our visit also included a bus tour to Nin, a fortified village, also with Roman origins and many visible Roman ruins.



We then moved on to Kotor, Montenegro which, for me, was the hidden jewel of this cruise. Kotor itself is nestled at the end of a deep fiord and is dominated by a castle and a church, both high up on the surrounding mountain. We took a breathtaking bus trip up the mountain, with a break for lunch in a

small village, before continuing to Cetinje, the seat of the former Montenegrin monarchy. Coming down the mountains toward Kotor, we passed through Budva, reputedly the oldest settlement in Montenegro, and now a burgeoning resort town for the rich and famous. We shared one of the best dining experiences of our lives as we sailed away from Kotor - eating superb food washed down with a nice wine on the outside terrace as we steamed along the magnificent fiord in almost perfect weather.





Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 7

Our Mediterranean Cruise (continued)

After a day at sea, we arrived in Palermo, Sicily. Here, as in every port, we took advantage of a shore excursion to familiarise ourselves with the locale. This “home of the Mafia” (a term not heard during our stay) is a bustling, interesting city dominated by a large cathedral and one of the largest opera houses in the world, the Teatro Massimo.



From Palermo we sailed to Civitavecchia, the port of Rome where once again we took a shore excursion, a gruelling ten-hour trip in the hottest weather of the cruise (about 88 degrees F). A day is simply not long enough to see or to digest this city, so we were only able to take away snapshots of some of the treasures of the Eternal City.



Among those we visited were the Spanish Steps, the Trevi Fountain (undergoing a major refurbishment), the Pantheon, the Vatican and St Peter's Square and Cathedral, the Circus Maximus, and the Coliseum.



Our next port of call was Livorno which served as our base for visits to glorious Florence and Pisa, another long day full of memorable and moving sights—the Duomo and Campanile, Michelangelo's David (actually a copy!), the Ponte Vecchio and much more in Florence and of course, the leaning tower in Pisa. Interestingly, it is not the only thing leaning in the square - the large domed structure (Baptistry, I think), beside the Cathedral, also has a definite tilt!



We then left Italy and sailed for the excesses of Monte Carlo. From here we forayed off to Grasse to be treated to the production of perfume (not of universal

interest!), then on to the Cannes Film Festival where we were exposed to the lives of the filthy rich. Interesting, but not very enlightening or enriching!



However, we then moved on to another real jewel, the village of St Paul de Vence, a beautiful old walled village atop a high hill.



Marseilles, our next port, was a bit of a surprise. My pre-conceived picture was of a rather seedy and somewhat mysterious port full of spies and other shady characters. In fact, it has been considerably cleaned up and is now a very interesting and diverse city that has preserved its traditional values and blended them nicely into a program of modernisation. While we were here we also visited the village of Cassis—once a quaint fishing village, but now



Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 8

Our Mediterranean Cruise (concluded)

an artist's hangout and a bit of a tourist trap.

The cruise ended in Barcelona, and as in Venice, we spent an extra day in a hotel to decompress a bit. We found this to be an absolutely enchanting city full of historically interesting sites, but, regardless of their period of construction, full of the most remarkable



and eye-catching architecture. The highlight was the Sagrada Familia church that has been under construction for almost 150 years and which shows no sign of being completed any time soon. We also enjoyed the panoramic view of the city from the infamous Castle Montjuic, site of some nastiness during the Spanish Civil War. The presence of two Olympic Games in Barcelona has had a very positive effect on the city. On the other hand, the two bull fight rings in the city present a rather forlorn picture since bullfighting was banned in 2012. The bulls are happy, but what does an out of work matador do?



It was definitely worth spending the extra bucks to travel with Oceana. Everything was a step up from what we had previously experienced - accommodations, service, food, and the overall fittings within the ship. This was a trip that will stay with us for a long time.

Class of 65 Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning - Contribute with a click! By Hugh Spence

If you wish to donate money to the Class fund to support its *new 2015 Anniversary initiative*, the ground-breaking **Class of 65 Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning**, which augments our established professionally admired and coveted **Teaching Excellence Award**, as well as the **Leadership Professorship**, it can be done in just seconds.

Go to www.rmcfoundation.ca, click on DONATE NOW, and fill out the presented form: check off *class* and enter **1965**, then check off *endowment*. (You can check off any other thing instead if you wish, but the foregoing directs your money specifically to the Class's unique and outstanding projects.)

In the "Amount" box, DO NOT enter a dollar sign, just the amount in digits. (The computer barfs when you put in a dollar sign, and rudely rejects your donation as too small to be worthy of its attention, no matter how many zeros you entered.)

All done? Then Bob's your uncle and you can feel great pride in being an important part of a grand contribution by the Class of 65 to RMC's leadership enhancement.

Donations to date amount to \$17K and it is hoped that enough can be raised by mid-September to allow the Class to make a nice presentation to the Commandant at the Reunion Weekend Legacy Dinner.



Issue/Numéro 85

June/juin 2015

Page 9

Another Reason to Attend the Legacy Dinner

As you consider which events you might want to attend at this year's reunion, you might consider the following as another reason to attend the Legacy Dinner. Aside from being an outstanding meal with great traditional ambience, and, as noted above, an opportunity to highlight the new Class initiative, it will provide an opportunity to acknowledge the five members of the Class of 65 who have devoted time as members of the Foundation Board of Directors and whose terms expire this year. They are **Jim Carruthers, Terry Colfer, John Cowan, Fraser Holman and Mike Houghton**. BRAVO ZULU guys.

Closing Notes

I hope that you will all heed Hugh Spence's plea for returns for the Reunion Weekend and that the Class of 65 will once again prove that it is in the forefront of support to the old Alma Mater. I also hope that you might give serious consideration to Gord Forbes' suggestion for a book of Class remembrances and contact him with your inputs. With hope springing eternal it seems, I also urge your financial support for the new Class initiative for a Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning.

Thanks to Vil for sharing a busy, interesting career and a well deserved retirement with us. I would be grateful for similar recollections from others who have something to share with us.

To close on a high note, I'd like to share a feel good story from the cruise I described above. During the transfer from airport to water taxi to hotel in Venice I lost my cane. Shortly after arriving at the hotel, I was talking to an Irish lady who had noticed my cast and asked what happened. After regaling her with my tale of woe and learning that she had been in the hotel for several days, I asked if she knew of a pharmacy nearby where I might buy a new cane. After telling me where I could find one, I went up to the room to unpack. About half an hour later the phone rang and a lovely Irish voice enquired if I was the "Canadian gentleman that the Irish lady had been speaking to". After confirming that was the case she said, "I've found your cane." Incredulous, I asked where she had found it, to which she confessed that she had gone out and bought it for me - apparently, the last one in the store. She refused payment and I became the proud owner of a cane that proved a major boon for the rest of the cruise. A wonderfully kind and thoughtful gesture from a complete stranger - the sort of encounter that reaffirms one's faith in mankind.

That's it until next month, keep those inputs coming.