

Class of 65 Newsletter

Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

Issue/Numéro 89



Sep/Oct 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 the experience of our 50th Reunion fresh in the memories of many of us, I thought it might spur some other thoughts/remembrances if I put pen to paper with my own. So please take this abbreviated issue in that light and not as an attempt to upstage everyone. I for one will be very interested in getting other takes on the weekend as a whole and on specific events individually. We were blessed with incredible weather that made the whole thing even more memorable. If I get enough inputs, I'll put out another Reunion edition.

Reunion 2015 by 6364 Mike Braham

The big weekend has come and gone and we are left with a flood of memories. The following is the Braham-centric version of the four days with the hope that others will contribute their own images and recollections of the event.

Janet and I took in most of the scheduled events and left Ottawa around noon on Thursday to give us time to get ready for the Legacy Dinner. Things got off to a bit of a shaky start when we checked into our room at the Delta to find closet space sufficient for a pauper with two days to live – clearly not enough to stow Janet's somewhat substantial and carefully selected wardrobe. However, after a bit of haggling we resolved the problem by having a check-in hanger cart stationed in the corner of our room.

Several hours later, and all dolled up, we drove Jim and Gail Carruthers over to the College for the Legacy Dinner held in the Old Gym in Yeo Hall. Dinner was preceded by cocktails in the very expansive cadet mess. This interim event gave us an opportunity to meet some of the dinner attendees and to find our places in the dining room.

Dinner itself was very nice – a well prepared meal of steak or salmon with all of the usual accompaniments of soup, salad and dessert plus a seemingly endless flow of wine. The diners were entertained by a small cadet combo as well as the Cadet Wing pipes and drums and highland dancers. At the risk of sounding peevish, it must be recorded that as much as I like bagpipes, they are somewhat overwhelming in a relatively small indoor environment.





Issue/Numéro 89

Sept/Oct 2015

Page 2

Reunion 2015 (Continued)

Fifteen members of the Class of 65, most of who were accompanied by spouses/partners attended the dinner. The Class was also in the forefront of the event's activities with Jim Carruthers, in his role as RMC Foundation President seated at the head table and providing a few remarks. The new Class endowment for a Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning was warmly noted and applauded.

The Guest of Honour was Richard Fadden, the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, who gave a most interesting but rather gloomy assessment of the current security situation facing Canada and its allies.

Seated at our table were a number of senior cadets. One was a 4th Year Naval Cadet and I was surprised to learn that his actual service experience (summer training) had been limited to 5 days at sea – a far cry from my own experience when every summer was spent at sea. Janet sat next to a Cadet Squadron Leader who convinced her (and by proxy, me) to support his Squadron during the obstacle course as reported below.



After the dinner and on returning to the hotel, several of us repaired to Jim Carruthers' hospitality room where we stayed for several hours replaying the evening's events.

Following a late night (early morning) on Thursday, it was just as well that the Obstacle Race didn't start until 1400. Our ever-vigilant Secretary-for-Life had warned us all that it would not be possible to drive into the College after 1400 because the road would be closed so, in typical Braham fashion, we departed the hotel at 1300 only to find ourselves in a one-lane parking lot. Apparently the bridge leading from town past the College had been raised to allow a boat to pass but then had failed to re-seat itself on closing. Anyway, after much gnashing of teeth, we managed to get through the College gates moments before closure.

The launch of the Obstacle Course was hilarious. Rather than being an individual race as it was in our day, it is now a team event with Squadrons competing against each other. Dressed in a variety of motley apparel in their squadron colours, the whole lot gather first of all on the parade square. Here they received a rollicking send-off from LCol Popov, the Director of Cadets who definitely got them into the mood. This was evidenced by the flock of chickens released by one of the participating squadrons!

The obstacle race itself consisted of twelve challenging obstacles that were tests of strength and endurance; problem solving; and, teamwork. As noted above, we followed 9 Squadron through the course and cheered them on to a second-place finish.

Following the race, the participants were each presented with a special coin minted with their name and College number on it. Six of our classmates – **Adams, Cale, Carruthers, Holman, Jensen and Mills**, volunteered to perform this duty on behalf of the Class – an emotional and important part of the recruits' transition to full membership in the Cadet Wing.



Issue/Numéro 89

Sept/Oct 2015

Page 3

Reunion 2015 (Continued)

Finally, there was a great surprise to cap off this event. Rick Mercer of TV rant fame had (unbeknownst to me) participated in the race and after the coin presentation arranged for and filmed a mass rendition of “Beer, Esses, Emma” for inclusion in a later edition of his TV show. Hopefully, someone will know when this will take place and let us all know – it should be a fun show.

We then had two hours to get ready for the Class Meet and Greet held at the Senior Staff Mess. We were all met by Hugh and Chris Spence who issued each of us – alumni and partners – with a snazzy name tag that became an invaluable source of tired memory stimulation as we tried to recall faces and names from years past. I’m not sure how many were in attendance (I’m sure Hugh can give us a reasonably accurate count) but I would guess that there were about 75 classmates plus an almost equal number of partners in attendance – a great show of support from the Class of 65.

On Saturday morning, I left Janet behind and went with John and Wally Adams to have breakfast in the Cadets’ Mess. This was a big change from my recalled experience when meals were served and there was a mighty rush to eat before dashing off to some pressing activity. Now the meals are served cafeteria style and, I might say, very efficiently. If breakfast was typical of the standard of food today, it is markedly better than I remember.

Breakfast was followed by the College Parade – an important event in the life of an RMC Recruit. After marching on the Cadet Wing (minus recruits), the First Year Cadets are then marched on and formed up separately in front of the Wing.

The badging ceremony then follows – an event where the Recruits are given their RMC hat badges to replace a generic CF Badge, by members of the Old Brigade or by members of their family. Once again, six members of the Class of 65 were honoured to perform this duty – **Braham, Bury, Colfer, Hilliard, MacKinnon and Spence**. This is clearly another significant event in the life of the First Year Cadets and one of the young men to whom I gave a badge had a tear in his eye.



The integration of the recruits into the Cadet Wing was then completed by marching them into the ranks of the rest of the Wing and then, through an intricate dressing maneuver, they ended up in the ranks.

In my opinion, the team approach to the obstacle race and the public integration of the first year cadets into the Cadet Wing is a much more meaningful process than that employed (or misemployed) in our day!

The parade was followed by another Spence event as the Class adjourned to the Senior Staff Mess for an excellent Class lunch. Jan and I left shortly after eating to go and meet our son Stephen, his wife Christine and two of our grandchildren, Addison (10) and William (7) who had travelled to Kingston from Ottawa to be on hand for Sunday’s March to the Arch.



Issue/Numéro 89

Sept/Oct 2015

Page 4

Reunion 2015 (concluded)

After a brief family reunion we got ourselves dressed up again, this time for the Old Brigade dinner held at the nearby Sheraton Hotel. As always, the Class of 65 was well represented, only slightly outnumbered by the



Class of 70 that was entering the Old Brigade for the first time. As with all the weekend events, this was another enjoyable time – good company, good food, and a glass or two of wine.

The weather on Sunday, like the entire



weekend, was glorious – sunshine with temperatures in the comfortable mid-twenties. Seventy-three members of the Class of 65 were reported as being on parade by our elected leader – Phil Bury, and we made up a separate Squadron. We marched to the Arch where a moving ceremony of remembrance was held to honour those ex-cadets who had been struck off strength during the past year – a depressingly long list. Prior to departing on the March, Hugh Spence had provided each of us with a list of the members of the Class of 65

who had passed away since graduation - 43 all told. I have reproduced the list separately in this edition of the newsletter.



On the march back to the parade square from the Arch, I was proud to be joined by two of my dear grandchildren – Addison and William, who marched alongside Pops and made his day!

I hate to end this segment on a sour note, but I was disappointed to note several recent ex-cadets who, in my opinion, dishonoured the memory of their fallen comrades and tarnished the overall tenor of the occasion by choosing not to dress appropriately for the occasion. Frankly, I was surprised that they were allowed to join the march!

That bit of pique aside, Janet and I enjoyed a thoroughly memorable weekend re-uniting with friends long missed; catching up with the College and the changes that have taken place over time; and, simply soaking up the ambience of the people and places associated with the Royal Military College of Canada.

In closing, I want to express sincere thanks to those Classmates who did so much to make this event so memorable – Hugh Spence who organised venues, menus, name tags, hat badges, lists, and general info, all done out of the limelight but with typical devotion and attention to detail; Jim Carruthers and Tony Goode for the public face they provided to the Class of 65 by their presence and outstanding performance during the weekend; to our “drill pig” Phil Bury for taking on the unenviable task of trying to get us all to stay in step and for inventing a range of new drill commands such as “Shuffle to the Left” and “Move a Bunch of Steps Back”; and, to all those who attended, including your partners, who made this such a special event.



Issue/Numéro 89

Sept/Oct 2015

Page 5

Fallen Comrades as provided by 6439 Hugh Spence

Hugh has provided the following list of classmates who have passed away since graduation. The College of entry can be determined from the following key to the College Numbers :

1960 CMR 6327-6507

1961 RMC 6508-6581

1962 RR 6582-6709

6513 John Telesphore Bart

6465 Jean Pierre Beaulne

6519 Ross Arthur Burns

6517 Richard Edward Briese

6507 Jacques Desautels

6529 John Disney

6484 Rexford Guitar

6634 Bryan Kenneth Harwood

6459 Boris Izweriw

6535 Harry Paul Kervin

6454 William Charles Leach

6666 Kenneth Maxwell Menzies

6504 Jean Morin

6338 James Mussell

6351 Richard Ouellette

6564 Stephen John Reid

6376 John Salter

6687 R.M. Selig

6571 Bruce Shiga

6499 Gilles Thibault

6698 Gerrit Van Boeschoten

6354 Richard Walker

6590 Thomas Gordon Barton

6498 Germain Bolduc

6226 Steven Roger George Burrige (RR)

6388 Jacques Carignan

6528 C.M. DiGenova

6356 Paulin Godbout

6412 John Hadfield

6466 Pierre Hatin

6397 Lorne Jackson

6384 Gaston Lapointe

6466 Pierre Marcotte

6455 Ken Moore

6015 Donald Robinson Murrell (CMR)

6366 Roch Nappert

6563 Gordon Michael Reay

6565 K.J. Robertson

6569 Glenn Hugh Savigny

6688 Patrick Dale Shamber

6450 David William Smith

6697 Gary Theodore Umrysh

6444 Ashley Waigh



Issue/Numéro 89

Sept/Oct 2015

Page 7

Closing Notes

It was great to see everyone at the Reunion—some of you clean up quite nicely. I hope a number of you will agree to share some of your thoughts and photos from the weekend. The same applies to those who attended the CMR Reunion weekend a couple of weeks ago. I am sorry that I was not able to attend that celebration, but frankly, two such events so close together are more than my creaking body can bear.

I received lots of nice words at the Reunion on the Newsletter to which my reply is simple— It is only as good as the input I get, so please put pen to paper on any topic you wish—some one out there will be interested.

As I mentioned earlier, I'll put out another Reunion issue if input merits it.