



CMHM NEWSLETTER

2021 CANADIAN MILITARY HERITAGE MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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In Memorium

Bob Thompson (2020) Member and former Board Member, Bob knew his history and was a dedicated long-time supporter of the museum.

Jim Kelso (Feb. 22, 2021)



Jim was an enthusiastic volunteer who was beginning a term on the board of the museum.

Jim was part of the Windsor Regiment and worked on Sherman Tanks in 1955-56. He was then in the no. 26 Recruit Troop at CFB Borden in 1957. From here he went to the Sarcee Barracks in Calgary – this had recently become the new home for the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadian) Regiment. He was upgraded to the new Centurion Mark 3 tank. He moved in the Recce A Squadron. From here he went to the Middle East as a UN Peacekeeper as part of the UNEF 1 (United Nations Emergency Force). Jim was stationed at Camp Rafah in 1961 and stayed until 1962. During his time

there he helped to teach locals to read and write English and they taught him Arabic. He also helped run the Blue Beret Café. On one occasion he and others were sent out to rescue a downed Egyptian pilot – he kept a piece of the cockpit glass with his name etched on it. He also unfortunately lost his best friend James Wiley during an action there. He was honourably discharged in 1963. Jim Kelso was a proud Canadian.

These men will be remembered.

Since we left you last.....

Seems like a long time since the doors of the museum were open to the public – and it is – almost 15 months!

As mentioned in the previous update we were making significant progress preparing the military museum to open in March. That's March 2020!

2020 was promising to be one of the most ambitious and exciting seasons for us and then everything came to a sudden halt! Unfortunately, all tours and banquets were cancelled but we held a virtual Remembrance week meeting for the Rotary Club.

The only positive result of the shutdown is that it gave us more time to prepare a number of projects that would not have been possible to get to in the off season. A small number of diligent volunteers have been getting the museum ready for some of the most impressive displays for presentation, many of which have been waiting to be seen for months.

WE HOPE TO RE-OPEN THE MUSEUM IN MAY

Saturdays and Sundays noon to 4 p.m.

The planned April opening must be postponed due to the Ontario Government provincewide new restrictions to contain the spread of COVID-19.

We will announce our official re-opening date with an email to the membership.

Announcements on possible 2021 special events such as Open House, High Tea, Speakers will be made when we are able to open safely for our visitors and volunteers.

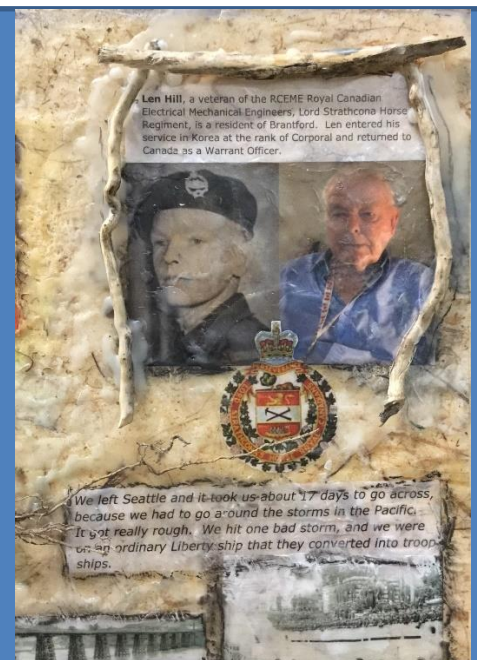
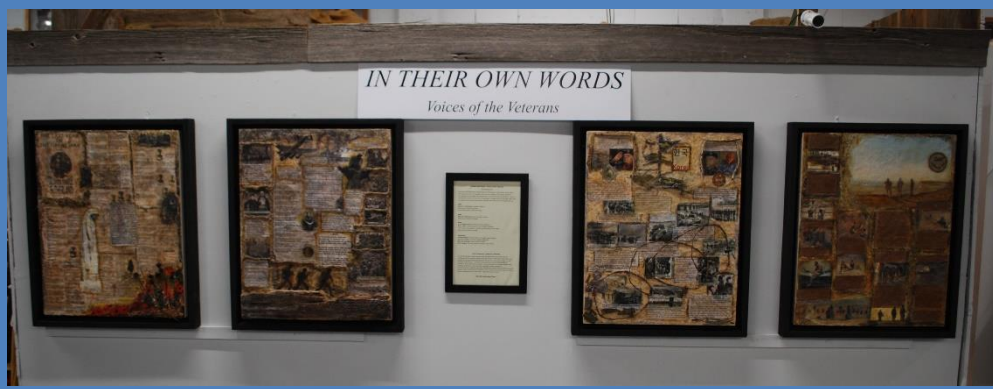
The museum will open with a Covid-19 protocol emphasizing the safety of our volunteers and guests with signage indicating mandatory masks, distancing and visitor number limitations.

New Display

Local artist **Barb Sutherland** has created 4 multi-media panels

"In Their Own Words" honouring personal stories of:

Canadians in WWI, WWII, Korea and Afghanistan. Included in these Panels is our own Korean Veteran, Len Hill.



UPDATES – WHAT'S NEW

Sadly, Legion Branch 90 in West Brant closed its doors in December. They will merge with South Brant Legion. Fortunately for the museum we are the beneficiaries of many artifacts and memories from the Legion. They are now preserved and on display at the museum. Thanks are extended to Steve Armstrong from Branch 90.



Polish Veterans

A dedicated display to honour involvement in World War Two is complete.



Young's Jewelers Donation

Three beautiful, solid wood display cases were donated by

Young's Jewelers. They house new displays in the World War Two area and at the entrance to the museum. Thanks to David Young



Dispatch Rider Video

lighter side of the World War Two Dispatch Rider is seen in a short video.

Model Display

Completed for 2020, but still unseen by visitors – An impressive display of high quality models of armour from World War One to present is complete through the creative efforts of Ted Abbott with assistance from Dave Pearce.

56th Field Regiment

Our own 56th Field Regiment co-ordinated several on-site field training sessions deploying vehicles and howitzers on our parking lot property. Very impressive young gunners – even in the rain and snow!

Rear Museum Building

The rear Building has received a new roof, exhaust fans, insulation, siding and heating with the generous assistance of Don and Joanne Wilkin. A major cleaning took place inside and the walls and floor are being painted. It will allow space for storage and provide a work area for vehicles and projects.

Before



After



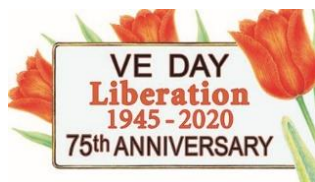
Digitization

We have received funds to proceed with a major project of digitizing our artifacts. First, ephemeral items and moving on to completing a comprehensive digitized/archiving record. The digitization project will tie into a much needed website upgrade that will eventually make easy access to our archives information and research data.

A very **special donation** just came in that will feature Father/Son/Grandfather artifacts from WWI to 1980's including a magnificent World War One Canadian Machine Gun Corps Tunic – stay tuned.

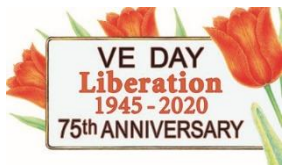
FUTURE PLANS- The volunteers at the museum are never ones to stand still. Plans for removal of guard shack and installation of new fence and gate are being discussed.

2021 Theme



The museum will carry over the 2020 theme of commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War Two with a focus on the Liberation of the Netherlands in 1945 with many new displays including the stories of "The Little Coat" and The Dutch Liberation Skirt, and a generous loan from Jean Thompson of artifacts representing a typical Dutch family during WWII.





HIGH TEA COMMITTEE

The High Tea Committee was very disappointed when the May 2020 event had to be cancelled. When it is safe to do so the committee will resume working on an event. One of the Canadian Women to be remembered at the next event is Margaret Ecker Francis.

Former Delhi Resident Given High Dutch Award



Margaret Ecker Francis

A former resident of Delhi, Mrs. Margaret Ecker Francis, well known Vancouver newspaper woman and former staff correspondent for the Canadian Press, this week, by Royal decree of Queen Wilhelmina of the Nether-

lands, was made an officer of the Order of the House of Orange.

She is the first Canadian woman to receive the order, awarded generally to persons in close connection and of service to the Dutch government or Royal Family.

Mrs. Francis was in close touch with the Dutch Royal Family both in Canada and overseas during the war. She accompanied the Queen on her first tour of liberation from Walcheren Island to Maastricht, and wrote many feature stories on Princess Juliana during the Royal sojourn in Ottawa.

Her war-time career reached its peak when she was the only woman correspondent present at the German surrender to Field Marshal Montgomery.

Word of the new honour came to Mrs. Francis in hospital where her first child, a daughter, was born Sunday. She is the wife of Bob Francis, former Vancouver newspaperman, and a well-known magazine writer.

In 1944, Mrs. Francis won the Canadian Women's Press Club memorial award for the year's best personality biographical sketch by a Canadian woman.

Margaret was one of the first women to be accredited to the Canadian and American Armies as a war correspondent. She began her career after she graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1936.

Margaret was the only woman to witness Germany's surrender at Rheims France May 7, 1945. Of the 16 reporters present she was one of three Canadians. reporters were handpicked by the U.S. Army to attend the German signing of its surrender.

When General Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander, spotted her at Rheims, he asked an assistant, "What's that child doing here?" Her feeling at being the only woman present at the signing of peace terms, Miss Ecker described as "I was hot, uncomfortable and scared, a lot" Miss Ecker smiled (Globe & Mail, Sept. 10, 1945).

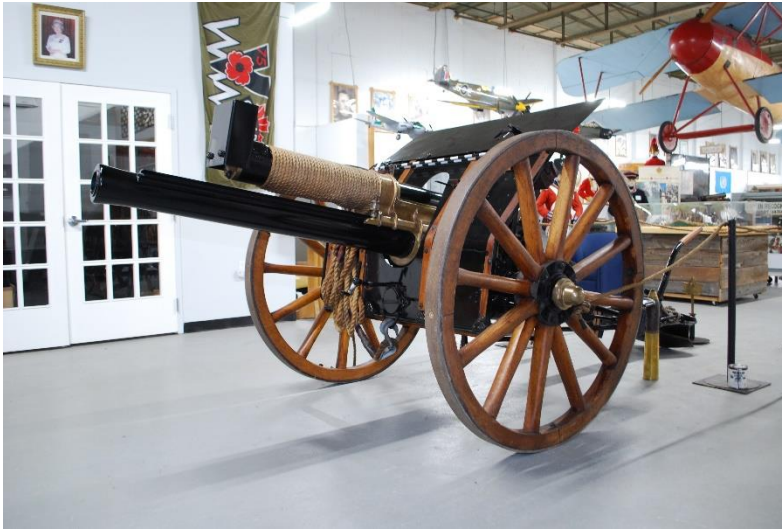


Margaret visited Brantford and wrote about the Royal Canadian Air Force (Womens Division). At the No. 5 Service Flying training school she interviewed a number of women

and described the activities.

The High Tea Committee has an exciting theatrical feature on Margaret Ecker for the audience at the next event.

Ecker Quote: "Discussing postwar plans of Canadian Women, Miss Ecker said so far as she was aware there are two classes, those who want to get married and have a home and family, and those who want to pursue careers as business or professional women. None of the women she had spoken to wanted to go back to "just doing nothing". (Women War Correspondent Praises Work of Canuck Nursing Sisters. Quebec, Sept. 9, 1945 (CP))



18 POUNDER

Our beautifully restored World War One 18 pounder Artillery gun is prominently displayed in the front entrance.

We owe thanks to many for their generous, ongoing support of the museum:
Don & Joanne Wilkin – never-ending support and tireless hours spent making the museum look second-to-none.

The City of Brantford for the paving and painting of our parking lot.
Brant Radiant Heater for the donation of heating unit for back building.
We sincerely thank our volunteers, members, visitors, and all supporters.

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to the significant number of members who renewed for 2020!

Your support is vital and very much appreciated!

Your 2020 membership will be honoured until Dec. 31, 2021

Adults \$25

Students & Seniors \$20

Family \$35

Corporate memberships available

Please send any changes of contact information to don.musson@gmail.com

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Check us out on FACEBOOK

Any ideas or suggestions for newsletter contact Bob Ion at bobbyionjr@gmail.com

**LOOKING FORWARD TO EXCITING DAYS AHEAD AT THE MUSEUM!
STAY TUNED**