

The Corpsrespondent

~ Newsletter of Hamilton Division—Winter 2005 ~



Glorious and Free By David Craig

This magnificent painting by Canadian artist David Craig beautifully captures the sense of happiness and joy experienced by people all over the world at the news that the war in Europe had finally come to an end in May 1945. Balancing the picture are two significant structures, the Canadian Parliament Peace Tower on the left and the Dutch windmill on the right. They symbolize the special bond of friendship that has existed between the Dutch and Canadian people since Canadian forces liberated Holland in 1945. To our few remaining veterans of WW2 and to those of you who served Canada in later conflicts, this **Year of the Veteran** is dedicated to you.

EDITOR'S COMMENT.

This edition of *The Corpsrespondent* is, as is immediately evident, somewhat larger than normal. At this time of year we always have lots to write about; awards and Remembrance Day being the most important. In this 'Year of the Veteran' we have even more. Much of what we cover under the 'Year of the Veteran' relates to veterans of WW2 and Korea. To those few remaining on our rolls we offer a special salute. Having said that, Hamilton Division would like to extend to all former (and current) members of The Canadian Forces, especially those of you who have served in distant and troubled places, our congratulations and sincere thanks for a job well done. Please know that this 'Year of the Veteran.' is for you too.

Commissionaires Receive Service Awards

On Monday, November 21st, Cmdre. Ross Bennett CMM, CD, Chairman of the Board of Governors, presented one *Commissionaires Distinguished Service Medal* and eight *Commissionaire Long Service Medals* to members of Hamilton Division at a dinner held in their honour at the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce.

The *Commissionaires Distinguished Service Medal* is very special and is awarded for service considered well above the what is normal for a member of the Corps.

The *Commissionaire Long Service Medal* is presented to Commissionaires who have completed a minimum of twelve years of service. Cmdre. Bennett was himself a recipient and was presented his medal by past-chairman Col. James Forsyth, CStJ, CD. Congratulations to all recipients and best wishes to all of you for the next twelve years



Commissionaire Service Medal recipients following the presentation ceremonies.

FRONT ROW: Cdr. Robert Williamson CD, LCol. Paul Garrick CD, Cmdre Ross Bennett CMM, CD, Comm John Pierce CD, Comm Bill London, CD,

BACK ROW: Comm. Dennis Vickers, Comm. Willy Ballageer CD, Comm. Cyril (Eddie) Fisher CD, and CWO Harold Reilly CD

NOT PRESENT: Comm. Al Robertson, MWO Roy Martin and Sgt. Michael Osier.

Commissionaires Distinguished Service Medal
awarded to
CWO Harold Reilly CD

The number '22' seems to be a significant figure for CWO Harold Reilly. It represents not only his years of service in the Royal Canadian Navy but also his total time as a working Commissionaire. Born and raised in Manitoba Harold joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1955 and having trained as a signalman spent the next two decades where a good sailor should be, at sea. HMCS ships on which he served included, among others, the destroyers *Toronto* and *Saguenay* and the mine-sweeper *Chignecto*. One of Harold's sadder memories is serving on the HMCS *Kootenay* when she suffered her terrible explosion in 1969. Several of her crew lost their lives on the day with many others seriously injured.



Following service at sea and a variety of 'shore' postings on both sides of the country Harold finally retired from the RCN in the late seventies. Soon after his return to civilian life the Corps of Commissionaires (Halifax) beckoned. Harold took up duties first with the Bridge Commission and later with the Grace Maternity Hospital (one of his more memorable assignments.) Later, having moved to Winnipeg Harold was promoted to Sergeant and placed in charge of 46 Commissionaires attached to the Winnipeg Police service. During that period he received numerous Letters of Appreciation. Harold finally settled in the Hamilton area where he became a By-law officer in Stoney Creek. In the fall of 1999 he transferred to Hamilton, was promoted to the rank of CWO and appointed detachment commander of Hamilton By-law.

He continues to receive Letters of Appreciation from Division CEO's and is highly respected by the By-law officers in his command. CWO Harold Reilly CD is in his 22nd year with The Corps and is a worthy recipient of **The Commissionaires Distinguished Service**

**New Detachment Commander
For Niagara Falls By-law**

Congratulations to **WO John McPherson** who was recently appointed to his new post. He is shown here being presented his Warrant Officers 'Crowns' by Cdr. Fred Lee. WO McPherson replaces **Mike Hammill** who has recently relocated to Victoria B.C. We wish Mike well in his new life in the far west.





2005 ~ The Year of the Veteran



If any organization has been, by tradition and association, identified with veterans it is **The Canadian Corps of Commissionaires**. In fact the very reason the Corps of Commissionaires came into being in Canada in 1925 was to provide employment to veterans of Canadian services who had fought in WW1. The Hamilton Division, founded in 1937, employed only war veterans until the 1960's when retired military people from the post-war years were finally accepted for enrollment. Sadly, with the passing of time the number of war-veterans serving within the ranks of Hamilton Division is dwindling rapidly. As this is written there are only six of our current members who served in WW2. Two others are veterans of the conflict in Korea. They are:

Comm. Eric Barton, RCAF ~ Ground Crew ~ 1940 to 1945

WO Ivan Cooper, 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, ~1944 to 1946

Comm. Bill Dorks, Royal Canadian Army Service Corps ~ 1944 to 1945

Comm. George Gibson, Canadian Infantry Corps ~ 1943 to 1945

Comm. Eugene Pieprzak, RCAF Europe ~ 1943 to 1946

Comm. Norah Wilson, WRAF Telephonist at Croydon and Biggin Hill ~ 1941 to 1946

Comm. Morley Balinson, 2nd Bn, PPCLI- Korea ~ 1950 to 1951

Comm. John James, Royal Navy- Korea 1948 to 1955



To these members, and to the hundreds of former Commissionaires, many now deceased, who answered the call to arms when Canada and Great Britain needed you, your fellow Commissionaires offer a very special salute with our sincere gratitude for all that you gave, and offered to give, in your youth. You helped to make the world a better place.

World War Two Veteran, WO Ivan Cooper on parade at the Burlington Cenotaph on November 11, 2005. Ivan served with the 1st Parachute Battalion, Canadian Army, from 1944 to 1946. He parachuted into Europe a few days after D-Day 1944. There was a time when all but a few members of Hamilton Division would have service records similar to WO Cooper's. Sadly our ranks of war-veterans are rapidly becoming fewer. We hope that Ivan Cooper and the other Commissionaires mentioned above know how very proud of them we are.



2005 Remembrance Day ~ Burlington



Each year at this time we endeavour to report about Commissionaires as they participate in Remembrance Day ceremonies in their respective communities. It is heartening to note that what used to be an annual event that took place on only one day (an annual event that was largely ignored by the public) remembrance services and events now tend to span a good week in most communities and are better attended than ever before. This year, on November 11, Commissionaires in every part of Hamilton Division laid no fewer than seven wreaths at cenotaphs and services from the Kitchener-Waterloo area all the way down to St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.

This year, thanks to the excellent picture-taking skills of MWO Jim Farrauto, we are able to present photographs of Commissionaires participating in ceremonies in Burlington.

In the upper-left photo Commissionaire Ken O'Breza CD proudly carries the Canadian flag in the Colour Party of . Branch 60 of the Royal Canadian Legion. Lower-left, Sgt. Wally Trapler and MWO Jim Farrauto CD share a moment following the ceremony. Lower-right, Sgt. Wally Trapler pays tribute to fallen comrades at the laying of the Commissionaires wreath.





Commissionaire Profile ~ Comm. Morley Balinson CD ~



When Morley Balinson graduated from Westdale Secondary School WW2 was well on its way to being over, a fact that did not sit well with Morley or his class-mates. Within all young men of his generation there was a great desire, indeed a determination to be part of it all, to “sign-up” and get over there and do their bit to defeat the nazis and bring peace to the world. But it wasn't to be. By the time Morley had joined the Army and completed his training, becoming very proficient on the Vickers Machine Gun, the war had wound down and he had returned to join his family printing business on King Street West.

Then, in 1950 the North Koreans crossed the 38th Parallel and brought the forces of the newly formed United Nations to a war in which, just like all major conflicts before, Canadians would distinguish themselves and be largely forgotten for their effort. In August 1950 Morley Balinson re-joined the Canadian Army and soon found himself in Korea serving with the famous 2nd. Battalion, PPCLI Special Forces. He was assigned as a signaler/driver with the HQ Company and, to his delight, was issued his own 3/4 Ton truck with a Bren-gun and a WW2 '19-set' radio that was imprinted with, bizarre as it seems now, Chinese markings.

Kap'young is a place few Canadians have heard of. Only in recent times have some of our more astute journalists given it even a passing mention. On 25 April 2001, the 50th anniversary of this historic battle, one of Canada's finer journalists, James Elliott wrote in the Hamilton Spectator, about Canadians in Kap'young:



Pte. Morley Balinson takes up position with his Bren-gun in a village near Kap'young, April 1951

“Fifty years ago this week a battalion of American troops took up position on a rocky outcrop looking over the Kap'young Valley in Central Korea.

The rifle pits and machine gun positions they took over on Hill 677 were gratefully handed over by nearly 700 Canadian Troops desperate for a hot meal and a chance to sleep.

For 72 harrowing hours the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) had stood in the way of several thousand Chinese troops in an action one witness called “the perfectly fought battle in a forgotten war.”

So crucial was the volunteer unit's hilltop, last -ditch stand to UN fortunes in Korea that the battalion was awarded A Presidential Citation by a grateful American Government ~ an honour unique in Canadian history.”

Cont'd on page 8



BCATP Memorial Plaque Cdr. Bob Williamson CD



Cdr. Bob Williamson CD with the newly dedicated plaque. The graves of the 14 airman who died are positioned in a neat row next to St. Paul's Glanbrook Anglican Church in Mount Hope

On Sunday, September 25, the City of Hamilton's most recent commemorative military plaque was unveiled for this, the **Year of the Veteran**. The ceremony took place in the graveyard of **St. Paul's Glanbrook Anglican Church** on Upper James Street in Mount Hope. The plaque honours the memory of sixteen RAF servicemen from the Air Navigation School at Mount Hope who died while training under the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). Fourteen of the men were buried in the St. Paul's graveyard while the remaining two were interred at a Catholic and Jewish cemetery respectively. A Remembrance Garden was built in 2000 by the congregation and dedicated to the memory of these airmen. After a great deal of research and correspondence with surviving relatives, a brief biography of each man was prepared for the church archive.

A few of these relatives from the UK were present for the unveiling. Following the church service, everyone gathered at the Memorial Garden for a Remembrance Service conducted by the 447 RCAF Association Wing. Air cadets from the 779 Black Knight Squadron placed flowers on the graves as each name on the tombstones was called out. This ceremony was followed by the playing of the Last Post and a minute of silence.

Something most extraordinary and touching occurred at this point in the program. Just as the last notes from the trumpet fell silent, a 1942 Stearman biplane Primary Trainer from the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum lined up for a landing approach and flew directly along the line of gravestones. No such fly-past had been arranged and it could only have been attributed to an act of divine providence in recognition of these brave airmen.

The story of this RAF Plaque at St. Paul's Church began ten months earlier. The chairman of the Glanbrook Heritage Society brought the RAF Plaque proposal to the Plaquing Committee of the Hamilton Historical Board where the exact wording for the plaque was prepared. The task was undertaken by committee member, Commander Robert Williamson CD, who also the Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors for the Hamilton Division Commissionaires.

BELOW: Avro Anson MK5 similar to type in which RAF Students lost their lives. INSET: Stearman biplane that flew over ceremony as trumpet played. Both airplanes from CWHM.





BCATP Memorial Plaque ~ Cont'd from Page 8



Resting place of 118581
Ernest Johnson RAF
13 Dec 1942

He is an experienced historian and has written the wording for several Hamilton plaques, latterly the Municipal Airport plaque at Roxborough Park. From experience, Commander Williamson knew that it was critical to use the limited available space on a plaque, wisely. He felt it was paramount to stress that the sixteen airmen who lost their lives at Mount Hope were part of a significant Commonwealth air-training scheme that helped to win World War II. Few people realize that there were 107 BCATP airfields in Canada and that the Canadian Government contributed 83% of the nineteen hundred million dollars needed to finance the plan.

The Glanbrook Society wanted to incorporate a verse of the poem “High Flight” into the plaque wording, but Commander Williamson convinced them to use only one line from the poem as the title on the plaque. It has a perfect double meaning, embracing both the vocation and the spirit of airmen who have departed – *“They Slipped The Surly Bonds Of Earth”*.

Commissionaire Profile ~ Cont'd from Page 7

What does Morley recall about Korea? To quote James Elliott again: *“Morley Balinson said that to lose (Hill 677) was to lose it all ~ retreat was not an option. A 24 year old driver and wireless operator, Balinson spent the nights dodging bullets and ferrying Bren-gun ammunition to the base of Hill 677. His recollection is that ‘we don’t run, we hold fast. The Patriots don’t run.’”*

In October 1951 Morley Balinson returned to Hamilton to his family and the profession in which he remains active to this day, printing. Of course his military career was far from over. He joined Hamilton’s own Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (PL) and eventually retired from that famous unit as the Regimental Sergeant major.

For several years Morley was a special constable with the RCMP working at Pearson Airport.

In June 1989 he became Commissionaire Balinson with a variety of assignments including Burlington By-law. In October 2000 Comm. Morley Balinson CD was awarded the **Commissionaire Long Service Medal**.

Morley and his wife Joan have four grown children and several grand-children. He continues his military connection as a member of the Argyll Association and can be seen every year marching in the Remembrance Day Parade attired in the Army Battle dress uniform. It still fits. Then again the same can be said for Morley Balinson CD, veteran of WW2, Korea, RCMP, and the post war Canadian Forces.



Comm. Morley Balinson in traditional uniform of Commissionaires.

HEADQUARTERS WELCOMES NEW DISPATCHER

Sgt. Wally Trapler



Sgt. Wally Trapler has recently joined the Headquarters staff as our new operations dispatcher. Wally is a retired police officer whose career included 27 years with the RCMP, OPP Auxiliary and the CN Police. Wally joined Hamilton Division in 2003 and was assigned duties at WSIB in Hamilton. Wally is married with two children. He is the current Vice-Chair, Chapter Three of the OPP Veterans association and member of the CN Police Veterans association. Wally replaces Sgt. Ken Brady who has moved to the Manager of Administration position.

The photo at left shows Cdr. Fred Lee presenting Wally Trapler with his new Sergeants chevrons.

PLEASE NOTE! Sgt. Trapler, Operations Dispatcher, is now your **first point of contact** for Commissionaires. He is responsible for the co-ordination of personnel requirements for all worksites including short term contracts. Sgt. Trapler will also perform the duties of Division Duty Officer on a rotational basis. He can be reached at headquarters at 905 527-2775,

FAREWELL TO MWO JOHN GRAY ~ Sgt Bill McBride

MWO John Gray, who has been for several years, Manager of Administration and Quartermaster in head office, has retired from that position effective the end of November. Prior to joining the Headquarters Staff John was the detachment commander in charge of Niagara Falls By-law. Following service in the Royal Canadian Air Force John enjoyed a long career in senior management in the oil and fuel industry.

John Gray will be missed at headquarters. His pleasant, gentlemanly manner has been a model for all of us. This writer will especially miss the opportunity to join John for our afternoon cup of tea.

We know that all who have come into contact with him will join in wishing John Gray a long, happy and healthy retirement.



In the photo MWO John Gray receives a special Commissionaires plaque from the Commandant, Cdr. Fred Lee, for his many years of excellent service.

COMPLIMENTS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Every day there occur hundreds of examples of exceptional service to our clients and to members of the public. That few of these acts of courtesy are acknowledged is simply part of the job. However, every once in a while letters are written or phone calls made by people who wish to express their thanks and acknowledgment of what they consider to be service above and beyond the call of duty by Commissionaires. Congratulations to the following Commissionaires.

Comm. (now Sgt.) Wally Trapler ~WSIB Hamilton, who provide assistance “above and beyond the call of duty when a WSIB client threatened to commit suicide. His help under difficult circumstances “was noted by surrounding colleagues to be offered with the utmost of professionalism and commitment,

Sgt. John Williams, Sergeant Jennifer Shelly, Comm. (now Sgt.) Kevin Taylor, Comm. Harold Ottmann, Comm. Peter White ~ Mohawk College, responded with great care and professionalism during a recent automobile break-in. They arranged to have the car moved to a safe place, completed detail reports, searched for stolen articles, attended to the victim, all with great skill and empathy for her situation.

Comm. Amanda Anderson ~ who has been with Brock University for a short time and has already received a commendation for developing an index for the Commissionaires Handbook. Her initiative is appreciated.

To all of the above, and to those who were not acknowledged, many thanks for a job well done.

SERVICE AWARDS ~ Cpl. Rick Gallant CD

The Following personnel have been awarded the following for the periods indicated:

April, May and June (awarded in July)

July, August and September (awarded in October)

October and November (awarded in December)

15 Years (\$300.00) ~ Patricia Bachor, George Gibson, Eugene Pieprzak

10 Years (10 Year Pin and \$200.00) ~ Bert Brown, Dave Johnson, Brian McKenzie, Ian Robertson, Ernie stokes, Cliff Wilson.

5 Years (5 Year Pin and \$100.00) ~ Richard Beauchamp, Ken Brady, Brian Concannon, Barbara Cote, Fred Entwisle, Bill Graham, John Haines, Debbie Johnson, J.D. Livingstone,

Colin McClelland, Doug McPetrie, Ken Muir, Jim O'Donnell, Doug Pfeiffer, John Podrebarac, Robert Wales, John Hewitt

Important Notice About Service Awards

If you have any questions, or if you feel that you are entitled to an Service Award prior to **December 1, 2005** and you have not yet received the award, please contact Cpl. Rick Gallant, Administration Clerk **in writing**. Once again; Corps policy is that to receive a monetary award you must have served time consecutively with the Hamilton Division. Previous service is only applied for awarding of the pin, Long Service Medals or Bars.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Were Winters Always This Cold? ~ Sgt. Bill McBride

We Canadians are a 'hardy' bunch. Year after year we endure winters that are brutally cold each succeeding one seemingly worse than the one before it. We suffer through the long cold months with a lot of 'grousing' but with a certain pride in our ability to cope with conditions that our neighbours from more temperate climates could never (or so we believe) hope to survive. The wiser among us recognize the dangers of bitterly cold temperatures and take appropriate measures to protect ourselves from those hazards.

Sadly, there are people who neither acknowledge nor prepare for frigid conditions with the result that several people die each year from very preventable causes. I recall a foolish young Edmonton *Eskimo* fan who ran around Commonwealth Stadium in at the '84 Grey Cup Game. He was stripped to the waist and had painted his belly green and yellow. He was showing off to the crowd and was in the middle of one of his more spectacular displays when he collapsed from hypothermia and died soon after. It is perhaps an extreme example to write about but taught me that COLD KILLS! The fact is that even here in Southern Ontario people can die from exposure to very cold temperatures. At the very least exposure to extreme cold may well cause frostbite with severe and permanent damage to exposed tissue or hypothermia which causes a generalized cooling of the body

The risk of frostbite or hypothermia is increased when low temperature is combined with strong winds. This is called wind-chill. These situations can be exacerbated when the person is in a weakened condition because of lack of food, fatigue or when alcohol, tobacco or drugs have been used or the person is elderly, in poor health, or very young. When clothing is wet from sweating or immersion in water it will not retain your body heat.

So how do we prevent being hurt by the cold? Well the first thing is obvious; **dress for it! Wear several layers of loose fitting clothing that breathes; preferably wool. Silk, polypropylene and polyester pile are best next to the skin. Also, prepare for the worst conditions- take extra clothing when outside in cold weather. Stay warm. Wear windproof clothing or stay out of the wind and keep the head and neck covered**

Other tips: - eat high energy foods often at regular intervals

- hot, sweet drinks are best, but cold water is fine if nothing else is available**
- limit the time spent in the cold**
- stay with a partner so you can check each other for signs of cold injury**
- avoid fatigue - rest periodically in sheltered areas**
- avoid use of alcohol and/or tobacco**

REMEMBER! "Hardy" Canadians we may be. But we still feel the cold and are, like people everywhere, subject to its injuring and killing effects. Stay warm and enjoy the winter.

Board of Governors

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Sgt. Ken Brady, SBStJ, CD

Administration Clerk

Cpl. Rick Gallant, CD

Fingerprinting Manager

Sgt. Bill McBride SBStJ

The Corpsrespondent

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LAST POST

We are saddened to report the passing of Commissionaire **John "Danny" Daneliuk** in his home on November 7th, 2005. In his 73rd year, Comm. Daneliuk had been employed at NATTCO prior to taking a long term leave of absence. We wish to extend our sincere sympathy to the Daneliuk family.

WELCOME ABOARD

Commissionaires – Hamilton is pleased to welcome the following new Commissionaires who have joined our ranks since the last newsletter:

Robert Aubin, Vern Thibedeau, Shelly Baltin, Nigel Purvis, Dawn Atkinson, Eugene Filimonov, Melissa North-Mikulic, Amanda Anderson, Tom Rose, Robert Rossi, Robert Kjilaas, Mike Beardwood, Robert Cameron, Colin Forrest, Michael Clancy, Robert Goddard, Darren Thib, Ken Minler, Brian Klein-Horsman, John MacLeod, Brian Reid, Vince O'Connor, Erin Ball

PROMOTIONS

At Mohawk College to Sergeant: **Peter White, Kevin Taylor and Melissa North-Mikulic**

CONGRATULATIONS TO

Comms. Ted Cobbett and Dave Jeffrey have both completed their Industrial Accident Prevention Association Certification courses for WSIB.

WO Norm Redpath has been appointed Detachment Commander at Brock University.

Commissionaire Jennifer Shelly on the birth of her daughter **Sienna Grace** born November 29th, 2005. Mother and daughter or doing fine.

YEAR OF THE VETERAN PINS

Please remember that the **Year of the Veteran pin** that we have been wearing on our uniforms (over our left breast pockets) are to be removed from the uniform on 31 December 2005.