

The Ontario Model Soldier Society

Founded 1962
www.omss.ca



Monthly Newsletter for June 2016

Next meeting...

Sunday, 12 June, 2016

Branch 210 Royal Canadian Legion 110 Jutland Road Toronto
Meeting starts at 1:00 pm. Doors open 11:00 am

Monthly Newsletter for June 2016

2016 Executive

Tom Elliot
President

Jim Qualtrough
1st vice president

John Hambly
2nd vice-president

Gary Lenius
Secretary/Treasurer

Gail Stone
Past President

Eric Clarke
Program Chairman

Frank MacKay
Journal editor

Norm White
Annual Show Chairman

Meeting Dates

- 2016 -
January 17
February 7
March 13
April 10
June 12
September 11
October 16
November 13
December 11

Annual Show

Saturday May 14, 2016

Letter from the President



On parade 2016 was a very successful show. As result of construction on Garrison Road our show was held in the large well appointed Fort York Visitors Centre. The vendor's area was very busy all day with lots of shopping going on. William Britain Limited was represented by General Manager Ken Osen and his wife Ericka. They had an interesting display of William Britain Limited and Club products, literature and catalogues. They also had a successful show promoting their products as well as holding a Club membership drive and draw for a Zulu Wars Ambulance set. Congratulations to Alex Monsour on his draw win.

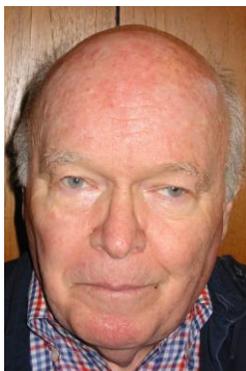
We had an outstanding display and collection area, with one display all the way from Alexandria, Virginian in the USA. The display area entertains everyone that attends our show.

The competition area had excellent quality figures and dioramas which covered a wide range of military history. This display inspires all of us to get out our figures and paints when we get back home and expand this area at future shows with more member participation.

At the June meeting we will review issues regarding the venue and be prepared to set a date and venue location of "ON PARADE" 2017.

Tom Elliot

Remembering Harold Morrison



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing on of long time member Harold Morrison on the 25th of April. Harold was a regular contributor to both the OMSS Journal and the Newsletter. Despite not being able to drive to the meetings he constantly was in attendance at our monthly meetings and the Annual Show & Competition. Harold was made a "Life Long" member" of the OMSS in 2013 and it was my pleasure to choose him as the very first recipient of the "Bryan Gibbons Award" that same year. He always had time to pass on a friendly word to people and his presence will be dearly missed by the members of the OMSS.

S. Dummitt

This Month in History

On the 6 June, 1944 soldiers from Canada, Great Britain, France, Poland and the United States were part of the greatest invasion Armada to ever sail. The D-Day landings saw the Allies land at 5 different beach locations, GOLD, JUNO, SWORD, OMAHA and UTAH.

At Juno, Allied landing craft once again struggled with rough seas, along with offshore shoals and enemy mines. Upon finally disembarking, Canadian soldiers were then cut down in droves by Germans firing from seaside houses and bunkers. The first hour was particularly brutal, with a casualty rate approaching 50 percent for the leading assault teams. In the confusion, an Allied tank inadvertently ran over some of the wounded, stopping only when a Canadian captain blew its track off with a grenade. Other Canadians lacked any tank support at all. After fighting their way off the beach, however, German resistance slowed immensely, and the march into the interior went quickly. In fact, the Canadians advanced further inland than either their American or British counterparts. Though they didn't quite meet their objective of taking Carpiquet airport, they captured several towns and linked up with the British on adjacent Gold Beach.

Memorandum

Former OMSS member and Master figurine sculptor, John Gauthier, recently passed away at his home in Bowmanville, Ontario. John was an OMSS member in the early



days, a sculptor and painter. Co-founder of Coronet Miniatures and, in the early days of Casa Loma, a trophy provider and exhibitor.

In later years he was a very active in the re-enactment scene, as well as continuing his sculpting



Whats New in the Hobby?

By Brendan Hogan



King & Country's "The Duellists"

May was a particularly busy month for the major toy soldier manufactures – with King & Country, Thomas Gunn Miniatures, First Legion, and John Jenkins Designs all releasing some very nice items for collectors to add to their collections. K&C has released a wonderful set of French Napoleonic hussars dueling based off characters in Ridley Scott's 1977 classic film "The Duellists." In addition, K&C has produced some cavaliers and standard bearers from the English Civil War, Apaches from the American Southwest, Royal Navy sailors in "Tropical Whites," three First World War mounted French cuirassiers and a poilu to escort German prisoners, three versions of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander of all Allied Forces in Europe, a Second War United States Marine Corps jeep and tent, and a German halftrack. TGM has produced some excellent Roman legionnaires and German *Freikorps*. First Legion released Russian soldiers from the Seven Years' War, a winterized Panzer IV, and two Confederate colour bearers from the 1st Texas as part of their cheaper "Mass Battle" American Civil War series. Their most recent newsletter concluded with a statement indicating that new figures will be added to their "Wild West" and Agincourt series in late May. All quiet this month from William Britain Ltd. Hopefully, some of their Vikings, Seven Years' War highlanders and native

Warriors, Confederates in frock coats, and *Fallschirmjager*, which were showcased on WB's Facebook page, will make an appearance soon. Some figures that might be of particular interest to society members are John Jenkins's Collectors' Club figure of a soldier from the Carignan-Salières Regiment, circa 1665, and Seven Years' War militiamen from New France. The Carignan-Salières Regiment was the first regular regiment to serve in New France and fight campaign against the Iroquois, many of its soldiers chose to settle in the colony rather than return to France. Hopefully, John Jenkins will produce a few other figures from this regiment, so collectors can form their own regiment. Besides these Canadian-themed soldiers, JJD has released a number of figures from the Seven Years' War Connecticut Provincials, American Civil War Union marines, First World War American marines, a unique Ottoman grenade catapult, and a Spad S. XIII biplane



Above: Carignan-Salières Regiment

Below: Turkish soldiers prepare a grenade catapult.



OMSS Quartermaster Stores

Frank Barrett's Annual Show!!!

I apologize for not making it to the Annual Show in May. Oh I tried and had spent several days looking for goodies for my table. In fact 90% of what I had packed in my car I had never offered before. Believe me there were real treasures but the gods were against me. The good news is that I will be bringing all of them to the final meeting in June. Included are a several sets of Shamus Wade's Nostalgia line. These are sets of Queen Victoria's Army of the British Empire and are truly rare because Wade offered only a very few sets of each issue. For example the Trumpets and Drum of the 1st Chinese Regt. had only 69 sets. My prices range from \$45.00 for some sets of an officer and two other ranks to most of the larger sets of 8 being \$100.00. There are several Canadian regiments from this era.

Also at the June meeting there will be a pre-WWII Elastolin German marching band. In addition there are groups of Britain's Eyes Right plastic conversions including: the Metropolitan Toronto Police (Mounted Division); Life Guards and Blues in Winter Cloaks; and Household cavalry in American Revolution dress. As well, in this year of special meaning for the Queen, I have the complete boxed set of Her Majesty's Coronation Gold Coach. Of course there are other treasures so I hope to see YOU at the June meeting.

Greetings from Frank, a member of the Club since 1970.

Book Sale!

Robin Ward is selling off some of his book collection. Due to health reasons he does not feel he will be able to make it to any more of the OMSS meetings. If you are interested in purchasing from his Library, you can visit Robin at 211 Forsyth Road in Newmarket. Give him a call first at: 905-836-2271 or email him at: swardn225@rogers.com.



**The D-Day Dodgers:
The Canadians in
the Sicilian and
Italian Campaigns,
1943-1945**

By Brendan Hogan

Parts 3 & 4 of 4

Unlike Simonds, Hoffmeister inspired his men, and he consequently became one of Canada's greatest generals. After commanding the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada and the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade, Hoffmeister took command of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division, in March 1944. Despite knowing "sweet bugger all" about armoured warfare, Hoffmeister knew how to lead soldiers. He led by example and from the front, because he understood that soldiers' morale could be bolstered "just by the appearance of a senior commander in the line when and where the bullets are flying." After Brigadier George Kitching's inexperienced 11th Canadian Infantry Brigade failed to cross the Riccio in January 1944, Hoffmeister had to restore the shattered brigade's morale and confidence. He built a rapport with his troops by regularly visiting, inspecting, and talking to them. He fired weak leaders and personally led his soldiers in live-fire exercise, teaching them to "lean into" the barrage. Under Hoffmeister's leadership, the 5th Canadian Armoured Division, or "Hoffy's Mighty Maroons Machine" as the troops of the division affectionately referred to themselves, became a highly effective fighting formation.

Like Crerar and Simonds, Burns was technically competent. However, he failed as commander of I Canadian Corps because he could neither inspire his subordinates, like Hoffmeister, nor intimidate them, like Simonds. Burns noted the shortcomings of his subordinates, but he did nothing to improve their performance. Although he successfully led I Canadian Corps in its attack on the Hitler Line, the first Canadian corps-level operation since the First World War, Burns' Eighth Army superiors and his own subordinates criticized his performance. Only direct intervention from Canadian Military Headquarters in London prevented Lieutenant-General Sir Oliver Leese, commander of the Eighth Army, from sacking Burns. Leese, however, did force Burns to fire his brigadier general staff, Brigadier G.A. McCarter, and his chief engineer, Brigadier A.B. Connelly, for their poor performance during the operations in the Liri Valley. Burns' tenure as commander of I Canadian Corps ended after he led the corps through the Gothic Line, arguably the greatest Canadian corps-level operation of the war. Vokes and Hoffmeister had no confidence in his ability to command and wanted to get rid of him. Vokes even threatened to resign. The new commander of the Eighth Army, Lieutenant-General Sir Richard McCreery supported his Canadian divisional commanders. Burns had to go. Crerar tried to save him again, but the results of the investigation into his command left Crerar with little choice but to relieve Burns.

During the Sicilian and Italian campaigns, staffs officers, like their commanders, learned the business of war and became increasingly proficient at conducting staff procedures. While tasked with preparing a complex fire plan to support the main attack against the Hitler Line on 23 May 1944, Brigadier William Ziegler, commander Royal Artillery of the 1st Canadian Division, and his staff received orders to simultaneously arrange a new fire plan to support a secondary attack on Pontecorvo. Preparing these two fire plans pushed the staffs to their limits, and they barely managed to issue the fire plans in time for H-Hour. Ziegler and his staff performed a similar miracle after the attack on Aquino bogged down under withering fire from German machine guns and anti-tank guns. Although the fire support did not alter the outcome of the attack, Ziegler and his staff arranged a fire mission from all available Eighth Army guns – 668 guns in all – to suppress the German defenders in Aquino in just thirty-three minutes. After the 1st Canadian Infantry Division pierced the line, Hoffmeister's division exploited the breach. Since Hoffmeister led from the front, he relied upon a competent staff to direct the operations of his division. However, his staff officers were still learning the business of war, and the pursuit of the enemy stalled due to traffic jams on the main highway in the Liri Valley and a lack of situational awareness. Leese reported, "The troops [of I Canadian Corps] fought magnificently but were hampered by the lack of coordination and control from above." Despite his criticism of Canadian commanders and staffs, Leese is also

responsible for the slow advance.

Leese's own plan called for five divisions, from two different corps, to advance on a single highway, which caused the road to be "jammed with trucks nose to arse."

Staff officers not only needed to direct operations, they had to manage personnel and massive amounts of materiel. The staff proved adept at managing the resources of I Canadian Corps throughout the Mediterranean campaigns. In preparation for the attack on the Gothic Line, the staff coordinated the movement of 280 Universal carriers, 650 tanks, 11,000 wheeled vehicles, over 1,000,000 shells, and 12,500,000 gallons of gasoline. Due to commitments for the Normandy invasion, I Canadian Corps had a limited pool of manpower available to reinforce its battalions. The staff needed to tap into all sources of manpower. For example, the staff formed the 12th Canadian Infantry Brigade of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division by converting unneeded anti-aircraft and reconnaissance units into infantry battalions.

Canada could not sustain forces in both Italy and Northwest Europe, so the Canadian government pressured the British government to withdraw I Canadian Corps from Italy and transfer it to Northwest Europe. In March 1945, I Canadian Corps left Italy and moved across France and Belgium to join Crerar's First Canadian Army. During the Sicilian and Italian campaigns, the Canadians sustained 26,254 casualties, approximately 28

percent of the 92,757 Canadians who served there. Canadian troops needed to get into battle, and they learned how to fight there. In summary, the Mediterranean campaigns indicated that Canadian tactical doctrine relied upon firepower and rigidly controlled set-piece battles; training prepared troops for the rigours of combat, improved unit cohesion, and afforded officers an opportunity to practice battle procedure; combat gave Canadian commanders experience and demonstrated their effectiveness, or lack thereof; and staff officers learned the business of war and became effective at conducting staff procedures.

Montreal Hobby Trip

Gates Bisson is once again hosting a trip to Montreal for interested modellers. This is a bus trip with stops at various Hobby Shops. The dates are 16-18 September. If you are interested contact him at (416) 659-8881 or email: gatesbisson@yahoo.ca.

Up Coming Shows & Events

3rd Annual /military Hobby Show in Ottawa - June 12, 2016 - The 3rd Annual Military Hobby Show will be held in Ottawa on June 12, 2016 at the Walkley Road Armoury. The show is a fundraising event to support the Ottawa Service Battalion Association and 2332 Army Cadet Corps. This Show is unique in that free table space is provided for exhibitors and information tables from various organizations. For further information, or to book vendor/exhibitor space, please contact OMSS member Bob Thompson (and show organizer) in Ottawa at (613) 523-3103 or email: thompson_robert@rogers.com. Bob will send out an Information Sheet and a Vendor/Exhibitor Application Form to anyone interested. Bob will be attending the OMSS Fort York Show as a vendor and as a promoter of the Ottawa Show.

Peterborough Militaria Show – 15 October, 2016. The show runs from 9 am to 2:30 pm and is located in the Armoury at 220 Murray Street in downtown Peterborough. Door profits go to the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment RCACC. The OMSS has display space at this show so please contact Scott Dummitt if you wish to participate.

Looking Out for Each Other

Know of a member who's been ill or in hospital? Let Gail Stone know so that we can send them the Society's best wishes. Contact Gail at 905-332-0653 or by email at gstone4@cogeco.ca

On Facebook?

Make sure and check out our Facebook group maintained by Dave Norman. Lots of interesting postings.
www.facebook.com/groups/57799975631964/

The newsletter is edited by Scott Dummitt.

News items and notices can be submitted to gijoe@kos.net or 705-939-1028

**Articles must be submitted no later than 14 days before monthly meetings
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