

REGIMENTAL NEWSLETTER

Cape Breton Highlanders Association
Perpetuating the 94th Regt;
85th and 185th Bns CEF; CBH and 2NSHighrs(CB)

Cape Breton Highlanders Association

Jan - Apr 2009 Volume 1, Issue 1

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

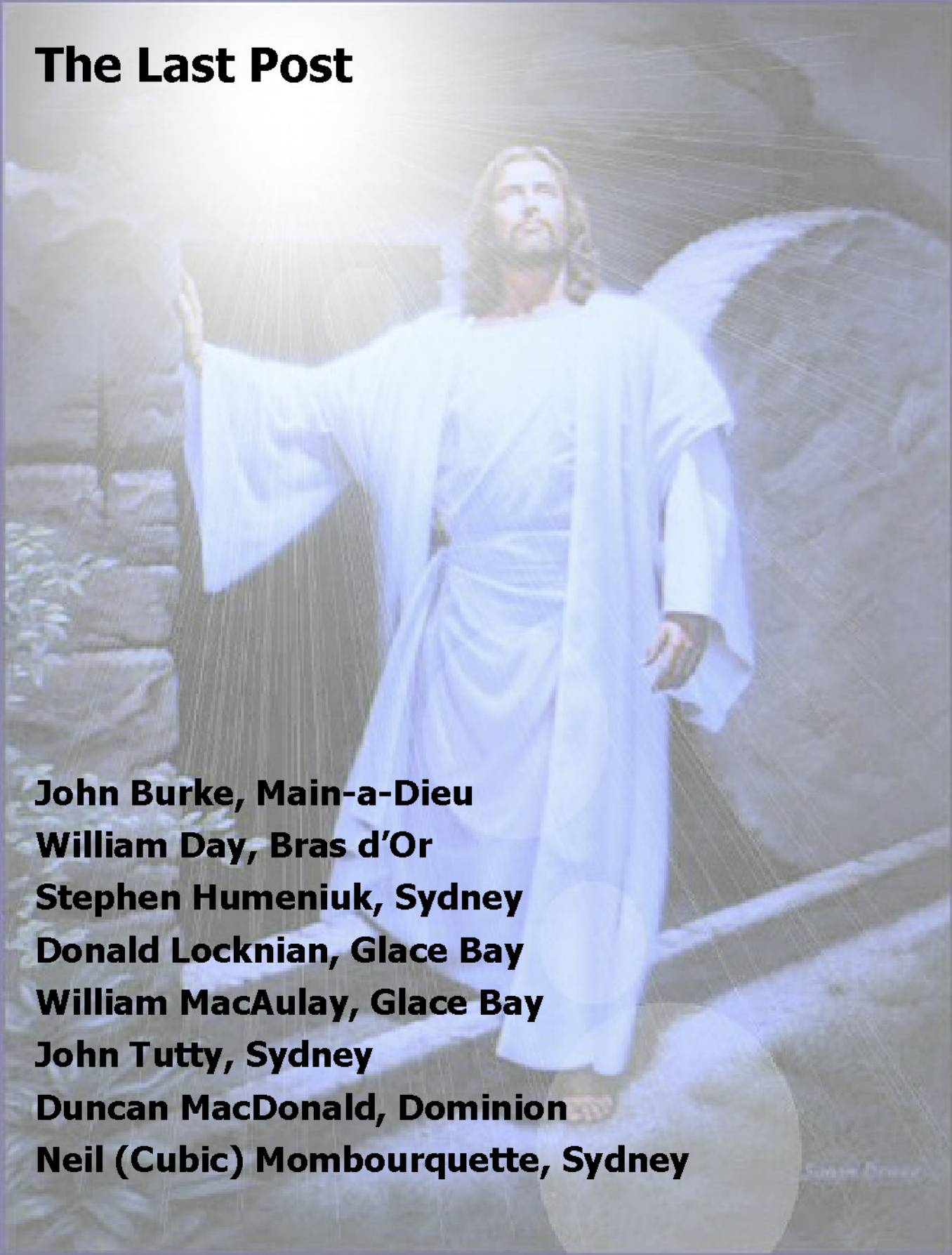
The time has quickly rolled around again, for another quarterly Newsletter, which finds the Association moving along with the tide and settling into a regular and productive routine. Besides our regular monthly meetings, on the last Sunday of each month, we have also managed to continue our annual (Holy Thursday) visits to residents of continuing care facilities in the local area. This Easter, it was Taigh Na Man's turn, and it was an excellent event, which will be covered later in this issue. Begun in 2007, at Taigh Na Mara, the plan was to alternate with the Northside Veterans' Wing at Harbour View Hospital, where we will visit again in 2010 (poetry unintentional). Another recent event, of great interest to the Association, is the initiative by Lieutenant-Colonel Joe Gillis, CO of 2NShighrs(CH), and his honorary LC i.e. the submission requesting the Unit's name change back to the Cape Breton Highlanders, while still retaining its affiliation to the Nova Scotia Highlanders. The submission is currently working its way (wending its way is probably more accurate) through the bureaucracy and we are following that request optimistically. Beside our regular features, included in this issue is another Reg Roy Remembers excerpt, of the WW H preparations of the Cape Breton Highlanders, a very interesting piece of Unit history.

Sic] Na Fear Fearail,
Gerald MacNeil,
President



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The Last Post



John Burke, Main-a-Dieu
William Day, Bras d'Or
Stephen Humeniuk, Sydney
Donald Locknian, Glace Bay
William MacAulay, Glace Bay
John Tutty, Sydney
Duncan MacDonald, Dominion
Neil (Cubic) Mombourquette, Sydney

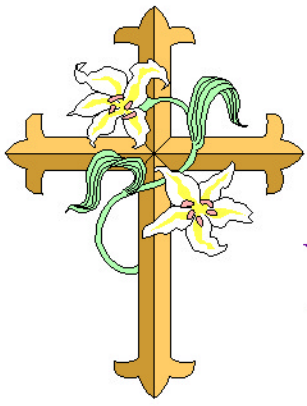
Museum Musings



Museum Musings

Thanks to the CO. of 2nd Battalion, The Nova Scotia Highlanders (Cape Breton), LCo! Joe Gillis, we have a new, larger, and brighter location in Coriano Building. With more space we can now better present our CBH displays and other material relating to our history. White minor details are always ongoing, we are satisfied our visitors will be pleased with the larger aisles and clean surroundings. Gone are the crowded conditions, as was the case in our former location. Best of all, we are able to have all items displayed the main floor with only a small quantity of paper and documents in our filing cabinets. Summertime always brings in extra traffic and this summer should be no exception, so if anyone would like a grand tour please let me know. Of course we are always on the look out for new display items. If anyone would like to lend or donate an item or two we will be only too happy to put it on display. May everyone enjoy a great summer of good health and happiness and we hope to see you at the Reunion 18 - 19 September.

John
Museum
902 567 2284



Happy Easter

As mentioned previously, a delegation from the Association again presented Easter baskets to residents of Taigh Na Mara continuing care facility. This was our third such activity and we were warmly welcomed, greatly assisted, and graciously thanked, by Carol and Nick. We were fortunate in having John Clarke snap the photos that follow.



Sharky talks with a veteran who packed parachutes during CWAC wartime service (note Easter headdress)





SITREP

2nd Battalion, The Nova Scotia Highlanders (Cape Breton)

Once more, we are indebted to the Commanding Officer of 2 Battalion, for the SITREP. Our successor unit continues to forge on ahead in several areas of endeavour. The Port Hawkesbury initiative has taken root and is progressing steadily. (you may recall that authority was granted previously to raise a platoon in the Strait area). Currently, 7 soldiers from the area are candidates on the BMQ (Basic Military Qualification) course and 17 more potential recruits are in various stages of enrolment. CSM Samson and Sgt. Fougere, from the Bde Recruitment cell are maintaining an office there and are also residents of the area. Lieutenant-Colonel, Joe Gillis anticipates there will be 2 x platoons training there beginning in Sep 2009.

Another initiative we are watching with guarded optimism is that of the move to have the Battalion re-designated the Cape Breton Highlanders, while retaining our affiliation with the Nova Scotia Highlanders Regiment. The request is moving along, with several letters of support having been received from prominent persons in the local area. A letter of support will also be drafted for signatures of the CBH Assn veterans, in the very near future. On other fronts, the Battalion has a MCplI currently serving in Afghanistan, with the Close Protection Force and doing extremely well. Three of our soldiers are presently training with the Special Forces preparing for deployment to Afghanistan soon. Another 6 x soldiers are slated for training in June for deployment there in April 2010. A number of personnel are attached to various units and agencies across the country serving as instructors in a variety of tasks. The Lieutenant Governor's Military Ball is coming up on 9 May, and will be heavily supported and attended by unit personnel and will also feature the Halifax Brass and Reed Band and the Pipes and Drums of 1 and 2' Battalions of the Nova Scotia Highlanders.

In mid-April the CO and Honorary LCol attended the ceremony at Knoydart (Pictou County, NS), commemorating the three soldiers who fought at Culloden (16 Apr 1746) and subsequently immigrated to Canada settling in the Knoydart area. 1 Battalion, The Nova Scotia Highlanders (North) has been attending the event for years; this Battalion will be participating, in future, and will hopefully bring our Pipes and Drums to join those of INSFI (N).



Reg Roy Remembers



We last tapped into Reg's amazing memory in last summer's Newsletter. In this segment, It is still 1939, the Regiment is still in Sydney, and new reports tell that "Warsaw is being pulverized, Germans and

Russians have swarmed into Poland" and Canada is preparing to send a contingent to Britain.

After a few weeks, we were engaged in company drill and, later, in battalion drill. We also began to have church parades; in fact there was a parade for everything, - pay parade, bath parade, medical parade and what not. Sometimes it involved a few, sometimes many. I remember when we were when we were informed there was to be a short arm inspection. In my innocence, I brought along the shortest weapon I had, my bayonet! That was not quite what they were interested in. But we were learning; we were learning.

Training in the Unit was basic, to put it mildly. We had the space but we lacked uniforms, weaponry, ammunition, and vehicles; in fact, just about everything. There was some excitement, to give you an example, when a large barn-like building went up fairly close to the three original buildings in Victoria Park... its structure was unusual. Then one day, in the barn, they placed a large coastal gun which pretty well covered the inner harbour. On closer examination it turned out to be a 1905 piece with a bore of about five or six inches. The upper end of the barn was on hinges so that, when the gun was fired, it didn't bring down the entire building on the gunners, with the recoil. That was a wise precaution! Whatever happened to it, I don't know. Probably it was a weapon from the Boer War and was rejuvenated to defend the port.

There were gun emplacements built and aimed along the side of the harbour which were manned by the (Royal Canadian) Artillery. Further out a harbour net was built to⁶

protect the harbour from enemy submarines wanting to enter. Sydney, by the way, was one of two large collection points for ships waiting for convoys across the Atlantic. In Westmount, one of the ladies' auxiliaries had built a canteen where the officers and men could come and relax and have a cup of tea while they waited.

Meanwhile, work on the church, to make it habitable (mentioned in last Newsletter) for the CBH went on apace. Bunks made of two by fours were constructed with a heavy wire at the bottom of each bunk. Each man was given a plisse which he stuffed with straw until we got a mattress. There were two blankets per bed, as I remember. Each person had a small wooden box which could be fitted under the bed. The other one, for the fellow in the top bunk, had one too. These contained the man's personal belongings and, made of wood, could be padlocked if he wished. He had to provide the padlock and lock, of course.

At one end of the sleeping room was a long rack which contained the rifles. Each man had his own. They were of Great War (WWI) vintage and we were responsible for keeping them cleaned. The pu and oil bottle were kept in the rifle butt, and the pullthrough and Jour by two (the small oblong of soft cloth) were the only things the Q.M. lavished on us.

Rifle inspection came almost every day. Sometimes trying to get the bores clean could be a task. I remember one fellow, my brother, got tired of this and when he presented his rifle to the officer for inspection, he slipped a pencil flashlight in the ammunition chamber of the rifle so that the light would show for sure that the rifle had been oiled.

Dress, of course, was a normal problem. The hem of the kilt had to be mid-knee or else. We had one chap, an Irishman, who had little use for the kilt. He was in his late twenties and sometimes came on parade when he was feeling somewhat sexy. He had no sporrán. Dress, of course, was a normal problem. The hem of the kilt had to be mid-knee or

Reg Roy Remembers

Reg Roy Remembers Continued

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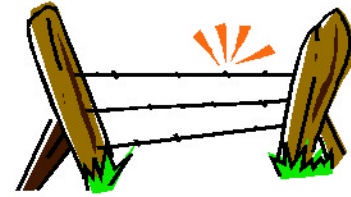
It was on 23 September (1939) that the government announced that Canada would send a contingent overseas, Unfortunately, the Cape Breton Highlanders were not to be part of the 1 Canadian Infantry Division. However, volunteers were needed and the Unit was asked if anyone wanted to join. About forty responded, nine of whom were from the Signals platoon. Most of these went to the West Nova Scotia Regiment (WNSR). It was not a large number, but at the time ours was not a large battalion. We cheered them on, handed over a fair amount of our equipment, which we could not afford to do, and away they went. The next time we saw them was in the films when Canadian soldiers were seen landing in England.

We could hardly wait!

VEIL Note: Alex Macinnis, one of these soldiers, who transferred to the WNSR, again put on his Cape Breton Highlanders Cap Badge, when he joined the CBH Association in time for our Year of the Veteran (2005) via Deijfzijl, The Netherlands.)

Ed Note: Alex Macinnis, one of these soldiers, who transferred to the WNSR, again put on his Cape Breton Highlanders Cap Badge, when he joined the CBH Association in time for our Year of the Veteran (2005) via Deijfzijl, The Netherlands.)

(Reg Roy Remembers will be continued in subsequent Newsletters)



40th Cape Breton High Reunion 2009
This year's Reunion will be held on the weekend of the 18th and 19th of September, and we will be reaching another milestone as we celebrate the Cape Breton Highlanders Association's 40 Anniversary. Make your plans now to come and celebrate with us!

Cape Breton Highlanders Association

C/O Ian Macintyre
28 MacDougall Heights
Sydney, Cape Breton, NS B1S 3A7
Tel: (902) 562-0635
E-Mail: iainbeag@syd.eastlink.ca

