



# Sabretache

THE OFFICIAL  
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THE CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## Kilroy Was Here

The vast majority of World War II vets are very familiar with the phrase "Kilroy Was Here" found written just about everywhere on every piece of equipment from Tokyo to Berlin. Quite a few Korean War vets saw it and even some Vietnam vets went through the "Kilroy Was Here" episode.

Kilroy was a 46-year old shipyard worker from Halifax, Massachusetts and, during the war, he worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in nearby Quincy. His job was to go around and check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piece-work and got paid by the rivet. Kilroy would count a block of rivets and put a check mark in chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice. When he went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark. Later on, an off-shift inspector would come through and count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters.

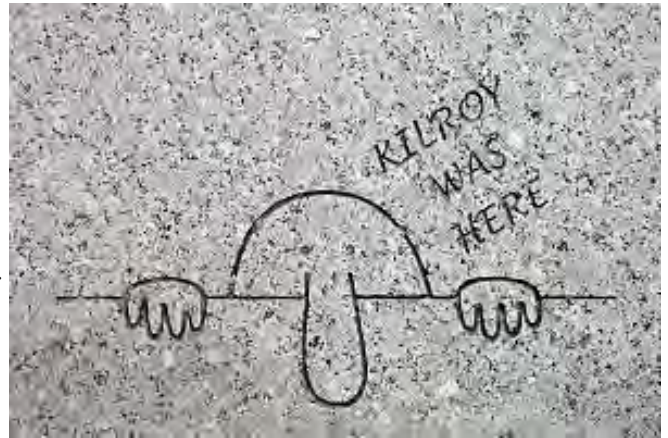
One day Kilroy's boss called him into his office. The foreman was upset about all the wages being paid to riveters, and asked him to investigate. It was then that he realized what had been going on.

The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can and brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with chalk. He continued to put his check mark on each job he inspected, but he added "Kilroy Was Here" in king-size letters next to the check. Once he did that, the riveters stopped wiping away his marks. Ordinarily the rivets and chalk marks would have been covered up with paint.

With war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy yard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them. As a result, Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen who boarded the troopships the yard produced. His message apparently rang a bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe and the South Pacific. Before the war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there, and everywhere on the long haul to Berlin and Tokyo.

To the unfortunate troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery — all they knew for sure was that he had "been there first." As a joke, U.S. servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

It became a challenge to place the logo in the most unlikely places imaginable (it is said to be atop Mt. Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arch De Triumphe, and even scrawled in the dust on the moon.)



### CMHS Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on

**Tuesday,  
January 19th  
2016**

**7:00 pm**

At the  
Petty Officers' Mess  
HCMS Tecumseh

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The  
CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

is a non-profit registered society  
which fosters the study of the  
military and the police, and the heritage of  
Canada, the British Empire, and the world  
as well as the preservation of military  
artifacts and records.

The CMHS meets once every calendar month  
at: Petty Officers' Mess  
HMCS Tecumseh  
1820 - 24th Street SW  
Calgary AB T2T 0G6

## Notice of Next Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on  
**Tuesday, December 15th, 2015,**  
**19:00 (7:00 pm)**

At the Petty Officers' Mess, HMCS Tecumseh.  
Members are reminded that an offering of foodstuffs for the Legion Food Bank is considered your unofficial entrance fee to our regular scheduled meetings.

The unofficial agenda of this meeting will be:  
Introduction of guests, Minutes of last meeting Correspondence, Membership report Treasurer's report, Old business / New business Break, Show & Tell  
The President, **Kevin Roberts** would like to invite everyone to remain after the meeting for an informal time of fellowship.



And as the war went on, the legend grew. Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese-held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for the coming invasions by U.S. troops (and thus, presumably, were the first GIs there). On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo! In 1945, an outhouse was built for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill at the Potsdam conference. The first person inside was Stalin, who emerged and asked his aide (in Russian), "Who is Kilroy?."



How did we find out who the real "Kilroy" was? In 1946 the American Transit Association, through its radio program, "Speak to America," sponsored a nationwide contest to find the real Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car to the person who could prove himself to be the genuine article. Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but James Kilroy brought along officials from the shipyard and some of the riveters to help prove his authenticity, and won the trolley car, which he gave it to his nine children as a Christmas gift and set it up in the Kilroy front yard for a playhouse.



Buy War Bonds Button



One of the WW II era's most popular comic figurines: a pregnant girl standing on a pedestal bearing the legend "Kilroy Was Here."



## Minutes of the meeting of the Calgary Military Historical Society

Meeting held on December 15, 2015 at the Petty Officer's Mess, HMCS Tecumseh

1. **Meeting called to order** by President Kevin R. at 7:00 PM. 18 members in attendance. One guest, Kevin Roberts's wife "Kathy".
2. **Minutes** of previous meeting. Discussed and call for approval by Bob M. Seconded by Dave L. Approved. Unanimous.
3. **Newsletter:** No omissions or corrections. Bob M. moves that the November newsletter be accepted as published, Seconded Alan R. Approved. Unanimous.
4. **Treasures Report:**  
Report by Floyd S. Lists of monies collected from book auctions, donations etc. Listing of expenditures. Barry E. moves that the Treasures report be accepted as reported. Seconded by Alan R. Accepted, Unanimous.
5. **Membership Report:**  
Report by Floyd S. Membership Total 52 members (2 Life, 2 Hon., 48 Regular).  
Eight members still owe dues. Member Barry E. moves that the Membership report be accepted as reported. Seconded by Don S. Accepted, Unanimous.
6. **Old Business:**  
Holiday Soirée confirmed. Jan. 15, 2016 at Horton Road Legion with meet and greet/cocktails at 18:00.
7. **Announcements:** None
8. **Correspondence:**
  - Wes Krause, Medicine Hat, Curator, Southern Alberta Light Horse Regimental Museum was awarded Commanders Coin #32 by the SALH Association.
  - Herb J. changed Post Office Box number to #204.
9. **New Business:**  
As per Kevin R. request for members to bring ideas to aid in increasing the membership.  
- General discussion, ideas tabled included:
  - a. Chapter fact sheet, advertising posters and brochures to be displayed in antique shops, museums, cadet movement facilities, school campuses
  - b. Mall and other venue displays
  - c. Create legitimate presentations for an unlimited number of audiences
  - d. Facebook page, moderated, closed.
  - e. Need for specific Club events i.e. Military History Day, Calgary Public Library talks.
  - f. Junior Members - \$15:00/year/e-newsletter, cadets corps, school history dept/clubs.
10. **Break** - no auction by Ticketmaster Neil.
11. **Show and Tell:**
  - David G. - Arizona trip pickups - Cpt. WA Shooter artifacts.
    - Each member presented a 50th anniversary of the death of Lt. Col. John McCrae(1872-1918) 5c comm stamp from an anonymous donor.
  - Barry E. - Boer War metal insignia, CM Rifles, Cdn Infantry and Lord Strathconas.
  - Allan R. - Gordon William Todd, Rocky Mountain rangers. WWII grouping.
  - Floyd S. - Pre & WWI German collar rank insignia.
  - John E. - Johnson rifle spike bayonet.
  - Al M. - Book - "Corvette Navy"
  - Bob M. - Medal groupings, German WWI diplomat frock coat.
  - Dave L. - WWII sweetheart pin & earrings, chaplain wood box/collar badge inlay, Pastoral Associates Cross for non-ordained chaplains.
  - Daryl K. - US modern helmet, 5 WWI officers cap badges.
  - Herb J. - WWII Italy, soldier/chaplain "grudge pregnancy" story.
  - Kevin R. - Curve shaped leather pouch, ammunition? WWI cavalry officers' saddle flasks, 1 large size, 1 smaller, both c/w case.
12. **Adjournment:**  
Member Alan M. calls for motion to adjourn. Seconded by Bob M. Meeting Adjourned. Time 21:00



## The Coca Cola Ad Shanghai 1937

The photos on this page all have the same basic motif: Japanese soldiers engaged in battle in front of a giant Coca-Cola ad. They are from the same spot in Shanghai, North Sichuan Road. But they are from two different battles – the 1932 and 1937 Sino-Japanese struggles for the city, respectively. We can say that for sure because the advertisement to the right of the Coca-Cola billboard is different in the two photos at the top compared with the two photos at the bottom.

Which is which? The two at the top are almost certainly from the 1932 battle. One major indication is the fact that the soldiers in the images, members of the Special Naval Landing Force, are wearing dark blue wool uniforms, the winter attire used by this particular service, which fits with the first battle for Shanghai happening in January and February of 1932.

The soldiers in the two bottom photos wear the thinner, olive-green summer uniforms, which suggests the photos were taken in late summer 1937, when fighting over the North Sichuan Road area was at its most intense.

How come that we have two sets of photos, depicting almost the exact same scene, but at a distance in time of more than five years? Two reasons. First, North Sichuan Road was of immense strategic importance both in 1932 and in 1937. It was the main line of communication and transportation between the docks along the Huangpu River and the overwhelmingly Japanese areas in the Hongkou district in the north of Shanghai, also known as “Little Tokyo,” home to a large number of Japanese companies, their employees and dependents.

The second reason: Press photographers of course



The picture of Ariving Road

have an eye for striking images. And the sight of Japanese soldiers battling it out in front of an iconic western logo was just as startling in 1937 as it had been in 1932.



上海戰線  
Coca-Colaに於ける我海軍隊の雄姿

梅間 清