



Sabretache

THE OFFICIAL
JOURNAL OF
THE CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

w w w . c m h s . c a

January 2017

OUR CANADIAN MILITARY DENTISTS

With the start of the World War 2, allied countries faced a real problem. Due to many years of depression and hard times one of the major problems was “dental health”.

The US military stated “American men are allowed to wear general issue uniforms so long as they had “sufficient teeth (natural or artificial) to subsist on the Army ration. Many soldiers were deemed fit but were under orders to get dental repair work. In 1939, the U.S. Army had just 250 dentists. By 1945, 25,000 dentists had pulled more than fifteen million teeth from American men.

The Canadian military had the same problems. The history of the Royal Canadian Dental Corps can be traced back to the Boer War in South Africa. For the first time, Canadian dental surgeons operated in a theatre of war. They were attached to the Canadian Army Medical Corps but had no Army status during this time. They accompanied the Canadian Troops in operations in the Transvaal, the Orange River Colony and the Cape Colony. The great number of soldiers who presented with dental emergencies established the fact that dental services in the field were indispensable.

During WW1, the Canadian Army Dental Corps (CADC) was formed as a separate corps within the Canadian Army. Canadian dental officers were attached to the field ambulances and did wonders in the forward areas. A British Army consultant, Sir Cuthbert Wallace, would later state in 1918 that, “the Canadians had a very perfect dental organization” and suggested that the British service copy the Canadian model which enabled them to provide advanced treatment in the forward areas.

In 1915 the first Canadian Military Dental Clinic was established in a stable at the Exhibition Grounds in Toronto. This was the first Military Dental Clinic in the British Empire.

The CADC began operations overseas in July 1915 with 30 Dental Officers and 74 other ranks - a ratio of 1 dentist for every 1400 personnel. By December 1918 over 2.2 million dental treatments were performed. This included 97,000 treatments for British troops and 50,000 treatments for ‘trench mouth’. Another 1.4 million treatments were provided in Canada.



Canadian Soldiers line up for dental inspection WW1

CMHS Meeting

The next CMHS meeting will be held on

**Tuesday,
January
17th,
2017**

7:00 pm

At the
Petty Officers’
Mess
HCMS Tecumseh

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE
CALGARY MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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, January 17th 2017
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, **Alan Ross** would like to invite everyone to remain after the meeting for an informal time of fellowship.

Between the two World Wars the Dental Corps was little more than a number of individual dental officers scattered thinly throughout the Canadian Army. In 1938 the Canadian Dental Association then successfully lobbied the Minister of National Defence to create an independent defence dental service. Subsequently the Canadian Army Dental Corps was replaced by the Canadian Dental Corps (CDC) under the command of a 'Chief Dental Officer'. The CDA nominated Doctor Frank Lott to be the Director of the new CDC and he was subsequently appointed Lieutenant Colonel and Director Dental Services. The word 'Army' was removed from the name in recognition of the tri-service role of the Dental Corps.

World War 2-When the Canadian Women's Army Corps was formed in 1941, the first female dental assistants were enrolled. Several hundred of these women were employed in clinics in Canada, freeing up male dental assistants for overseas service.

At the end of WWII the Canadian Dental Corps had a strength of over 5000 members, over half of whom had deployed overseas. 14 Dental Officers and 19 Dental Technicians gave their lives on active service during WWII.

The outstanding performance of the CDC during the war convinced the authorities that it should be kept alive after demobilization. In October 1946 the Canadian Army was reorganized and for the first time the dental corps be-



Mobile Dental Units.

came a component of the regular force. In January 1947 His Majesty King George VI granted the Royal Warrant to the Canadian Dental Corps in recognition of outstanding service; thus, the CDC became the "Royal Canadian Dental Corps. (RCDC)

Starting in 1942, the 1,523 miles of road, named the Alaska Highway, was built by the US Army Engineers over a period of eight months. In April 1946 the 1,200 miles of gravel road in Canada was turned over to the Canadian Army for maintenance.

The first RCDC clinic was opened in Whitehorse on 8 April 1946 in a military hospital taken over from the US Army, with the task of providing dental support for all service personnel, civilian employees and dependants scattered along the Highway. In July a second team left Dawson Creek in a mobile dental clinic to provide a travelling dental service for personnel in the maintenance camps and repeater stations. Their task was all the more interesting during winter time, with temperatures approaching -60°C .

Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the **Calgary Military Historical Society** Meeting held on December 20th, 2016 at the Petty Officer's Mess, HMCS Tecumseh

1. **Meeting called to order** by President Alan R. at 7:06 PM. 24 members in attendance.
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting.** Discussed and moved to be approved.
3. **Newsletter.** No revisions. Member and Historian Dave L. reports on comments in newsletter referring to questions and correspondence coming in from our web site. Believes word is getting around.
4. **Treasures Report.**
Report by our Loyal Treasurer, Floyd S. Lists of monies collected from book auctions, donations etc. Listing of expenditures. Treasurer Floyd S. moves that the Treasures report be accepted as reported. Seconded by Mike C. Approved by vote of hands
5. **Membership Report.**
Report by Floyd S. At last count, Total 37 members (2 Life, 1 Hon., 30 regular). Member ship Secretary Floyd S. moves that the Membership report be accepted as reported. Seconded by Member Mike C. Approved.
6. **Correspondence:** Pres. Alan Ross makes mention of a financial legacy that was emailed to the Society. Treasurer Floyd S. relates how we answered back to the questions raised and so far we have not heard anymore on the matter.
7. **Old Business.** Mike C asks about show at Hillhurst Sunnyside on March 4th. No new information yet.
8. **New Business:**— Questions and discussion of January 20th Christmas gathering at the Horton Road Legion.
Barry E.—Reminds all of January 14th Gun Show.
Mike C.—Reminds all that Easter Gun Show papers are out.
Mike C. has discussion about travel and everyone will soon need ETA Card.
Kevin R.—discusses his website www.thecanadiansoldier.com
9. **Break**
10. **Draw.** Ticketmaster Dave sells tickets and distributes books to many happy members
11. **Show and Tell:**
John E.—discusses his travels and remarks on NEXUS problem
Darryl.— shows a director for Victors Machine Gun and optics, Canadian Brodie helmet, and regimental crests for Calgary Highlanders and Service Corps.
Dave L.—Discussion and history of Chaplin McDonald WW1 uniform (summer canvas) and helmet . 85th Battalion. Also shows helmet from Chaplain Capt. H.B. Clarke.
Bob McP.—French Medal Collection , Pre 1900 Campaign medals including Mexican Medal. Legion of Honour, Order of Liberation 1940 and Napoleon Medal (St. Helena)
Mike C.—Shows purchased set of medals and wedge cap Boer War. Large set of medals from Dr. Maurice Person. Includes Boer War, WW1, WW2 (mentioned in despatches) Discusses his patents and inventions.
Gary S.—discusses his ventures to Glenmore Museum in search of Victoria Crosses in Calgary.
Alan Mc.—Discusses war in Congo by Irish Group. Siege of Jadotville (UN mission 1961) Unit citation for bravery and Congo Medals.
Barry E.—Dental Corp. WW1
Garret.—Button from Staffordshire Yeomanry 1850
Kevin R.—WW1 Lewis machine gun. Single strike. Discusses history and various markings on gun.
Floyd S.—Seaforth collections, Picture of Patton urinating in German River.
David G.—Boer War Medals.
12. **Adjournment:** President Alan R. calls for motion to adjourn. Member Bob Mcp. moves for adjournment. Seconded by Barry E. Motion Approved. Meeting Adjourned. 21:00



1950– 1957 Korea.

In early August 1950 the Canadian government decided that Canada would participate in the United Nations action in Korea. The 20th Canadian Field Detachment was dispatched. Challenges included ten year old tires on the mobile dental clinics for which there were no spares, a lack of kerosene stoves in the clinics and unserviceable generators led the dental officers to keep their local anaesthetic in their tents at night, and the tempo of the war increased and the dental teams were exposed to artillery shelling. During the summers the heat was oppressive, dust was a menace to movement, biting insects plentiful, the water supply was limited, which made cleanliness a



problem, and the overwhelming odour of rice paddies and “honey wagons” made life difficult. During the rainy season the roads and hard standing areas became a sea of mud. The last detachment left Korea in 1957

2001-2014 Afghanistan In October 2001 Canada contributed to the US led operation against terrorist elements in Afghanistan. The campaign included sea, land, and air forces. At any given time, there were three to five Canadian naval vessels on duty. Dental teams were deployed with

HMCS *Preserver* and *Protecteur*. In 2002, Canada deployed 600 troops into the Kandahar region of southern Afghanistan. A dental team was deployed with 1 Canadian Field Hospital to provide emergency dental care to the Canadian force. The harsh climate with extreme temperatures (usually in the 40 Celsius range), dry dusty conditions and frequent high winds posed a challenge. One year later Canada once again committed troops to Afghanistan. 2,000 Canadian troops, including a dental team, deployed to Camp Julien near Kabul in August 2003. The next rotation saw the Canadian Contingent downsized from 2,000 to 600 troops. Camp Julien became multinational, housing American, Belgian, Hungarian, Slovenian and Norwegian troops.



Throughout the tour the Dental Corps teams treated patients from every nation on the camp, civilian employees (Canadian, Nepalese, Indian), Afghan interpreters, civilians from the Canadian, British and American embassies, and British troops.

In late 2005 the Canadian Contingent moved back to Kandahar and became the lead nation for a multinational hospital, along with British and Dutch forces. The dental personnel on the ground found their patient pool had expanded from 600 to many thousands, and they spent long hours providing the most basic emergency care until other dental resources arrived. There were three dental teams in place



2011 Op NANOOK

The Royal Canadian Dental Corp. has also been present during many other operations.... **1956-1967 United Nations Emergency Force Middle East (UNEF)** 1963-1994 United Nations Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP) - (Op SNOWGOOSE), **1973 - 1979 United Nations Emergency Force Middle East (UNEF II)** 1990-91 Gulf War (Op FRICTION, Op SCALPEL) **1992 Somalia (Op DELIVERANCE)** 1992-2004 Former Republic of Yugoslavia (Op HARMONY, Op CAVALIER, Op MANDARIN, Op ALLIANCE, Op PALLADIUM, Op KINETIC) **1998 Dental Forensic Team Investigation SwissAir 111 (Op PERSISTENCE)**, 1999 Kosovar Refugees (Op PARASOL), **2000 East Timor (Op TOUCAN)**, 2004 United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (Op HALO, **2010 Earthquake in Haiti (Op HESTIA)**)