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STAND TO

VOL 01



MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER



Season's Greetings

*Heap on the wood!
The wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.*

Sir Walter Scott

This past fall training season has been another very busy time within 41 CBG. With many units working hard to complete their IBTS, DP courses and COMREL activities, it goes without saying that many are looking forward to a well deserved break of some kind over the Christmas season. It is recognized that some of our soldiers will be working at their civilian jobs, planning or attending the Winter Warfare Basic course or dealing with the stresses that everyday life puts in front of all of us. I sincerely hope that you all are able to take a few moments and reflect upon this past year while spending time with family and friends.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone for their hard work and dedication throughout this past training year. Your continuing efforts contribute to the successes of 41 CBG. I hope that you all can find the time to celebrate and reflect upon the spirit of the season; peace and goodwill in a way that is meaningful to you.

Wishing you the compliments of the season and all the best in 2011.

P. Bury
Colonel
Commander
41 Canadian Brigade Group

Fortune Favours the Bold

41 Canadian Brigade Group is the Army formation consisting of Alberta's 1200 Army Reserve soldiers. Reserve soldiers are members of the Canadian Forces that have the choice to serve on a full-time or a part-time basis. The Brigade Group consists of nine units, located in Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer and Yellowknife, North West Territories.

41 Canadian Brigade Group headquarters is located in Calgary, Alberta.

MESSAGE FROM THE RSM

Fellow 41 Brigade Soldiers;

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family all the best for the Holiday season.

Taking this time to slow the work pace and reconnect with family is so very important. Enjoy your time off and celebrate safely.

*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year.*

Chief Warrant Officer Adrian Thomas, CD
Brigade Regimental Sergeant-Major,
41 Canadian Brigade Group

Fortune Favours the Bold



TIME CAPSULE

CHRISTMAS DAY IN ORTONA

Ortona, Italy, was once a killing ground for young men's dreams; Ortona itself was a town that ceased to exist over Christmas in 1943

Ortona is on Italy's Adriatic coast and during the Second World War, it was the town where the Germans chose to take a stand and delay the allied advance up the Italian boot. It was the First Canadian Infantry Division, which included the Loyal Edmonton Regiment (4 PPCLI) who met the Germans at the Moro River, just outside Ortona and fought their way into the town during eight bloody days in 1943.

On Christmas Day, the battle for Ortona was reaching the peak of murderous intensity.

Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, the German commander deplored the bloodletting but said the paratroopers had to hold on because the allies had made Ortona as important as Rome.

As the battle raged, Samuel Lenko, a private with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, remembers, "It's tough, I tell you, it's really tough," he says. "I got to find Don Maclean... a stretcher bearer... he went out to find a wounded German soldier... and another German shot him. He had a red cross band on and everything. It was one of those things.. that just happened."

In the single most deadly incident of the battle, the Germans blew up a building packed with Canadians. The one surviving Loyal Edmonton Regiment soldier was pulled from the building three days later.

Amidst the carnage of battle, Canadian troops were brought back in shifts for a hasty Christmas dinner a few blocks from the fighting for roast pork and Christmas pudding.



As part of a desperate search for normality, an organist played Silent Night amid the inferno raging outside.

Wilf Gildersleeve, who played the organ that day describes the mood as they sang.

"For that moment we were able to live in another world... almost in tears, I think, to sing those words," he says, "and then in an hour or so to go back to their fate, whatever it might be and for some of them it was the last meal on earth."

"I'm sure that possibly some of the men on the other side were singing the same tune and I'm sure their feelings were much the same."

Many of the Germans spent their Christmas Eve huddled in an Ortona railway tunnel; crowded with wounded and dead. Memories of the tunnel that night are draped in trauma.

"At two thirty in the morning, we had to sing Silent Night," says Hugo Bauer, a German veteran of the battle. "And we had a Christmas candle and a sack of oranges. That was our Christmas gift. For everybody that was in the tunnel.

On December 28, after eight days of fighting, the depleted German troops, who lacked reinforcements, finally withdrew from the town. The Canadians suffered 1,375 dead in the fighting in and around Ortona, almost a quarter of all Canadians killed during the Italian Campaign.

DISPATCHES

Afghanistan Tour TF 3-09

by Captain Elisa Holland, CIMIC Operator



I have been back in Canada for just over three months, and my husband has also just returned from serving a 10 month tour. I can say there are some lingering memories and feelings from tour, but most have now become a positive part of my life.

After 8 months of workup training, I departed Shilo, Manitoba on October 16th, 2009, as part of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) to be a Civilian Military Cooperation Operator (CIMIC) in Afghanistan. I was looking forward to serving my country and hopefully have an impact on this country which has been at war for longer than I have been alive. CIMIC is a very unique role, as we are soldiers first but, our focus is on the relationships and building up the locals to take over once we, as the international community are finished our role.

As a female soldier, I was able to take part in what many of my male counterparts described as the "underworld" of female society within Afghanistan. I was able to participate in women's college graduation classes, host (and be a member of) women's Shura's, both in the city and rural areas. I was able to work with Department of Women's Affairs within the government level as well as participate in foot patrols to talk with women in compounds or out at the market.

Conversely, Afghanistan is a male dominated society, where women are in plain sight but "not seen", yet the local officials and general male population had to deal with me on major issues. At first, local males assumed

that I would be a "push over" and give in to their demands. They found out quickly that I was not easily persuaded by sad stories, but wanted hard facts, plans and outcomes for specific projects. By the end of my tour, many of the local elders treated me with the same respect that they would another man, which in this culture was a great honour for me.

A lot of people in Western Culture feel that the women in Afghanistan are very repressed and that the burka is very degrading to them. I found that in my 7 months in theatre, many of the women preferred to wear the burka simply because they could conduct their errands in a quick and timely fashion and get back to the home with minimal distractions or extra hassle. I also learned, in many conversations with Afghan women, that their needs and concerns are very similar to any woman. Education (for all children), jobs (to support families) and medical treatment are what these women would like.

There are too many things to cover in one article, but one last thing I would like to share is the loss of a friend in battle. I lost one of my closest friends, Sergeant Kirk Taylor on December 30th, 2009, and had the honour and hardship of bringing him home. As a soldier, this is the hardest thing I have to do and will have an ever-lasting effect on me. Those two weeks of repatriation services, memorials, viewings and a funeral are indescribable. I was the last connection that the family has to their loved one and I wanted to ensure that as much as possible is passed on to them. I truly learned so much about myself and how strong I could be, I also learned that, for me, time is the one way to heal and we all heal differently.

Overall, my tour has left a positive impression on me. I had some very unfortunate experiences from these seven months that will forever shape me. From those experiences, I have developed a better understanding about what is important to me, and what I can learn to relax and not worry about. I am re-adjusting to the "privileged life" we live in Canada, but feel that my tour has helped me grow to be an even prouder Canadian.

41 COMBAT ENGINEER REGIMENT

Neil McCrank to succeed David Bercuson as Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel of Alberta's Sappers



Neil McCrank to succeed David Bercuson as Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel on December 11, 2010, of 41 Combat Engineer Regiment (41 CER).

On December 11, 2010, Mr. Michael Neil McCrank, Q.C., P.Eng., will be appointed Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel (HLCol) of 41 Combat Engineer Regiment (41 CER). A true industry leader and accomplished councillor, Mr. McCrank brings a tremendous wealth of knowledge and experience that will serve this position well.

Traditionally, the Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel position serves to promote the best interests of the Regiment, the Military Engineer Branch, and the Canadian Forces at the local, area and national levels.

With accolades that include counsel to the national firm Borden, Ladner Gervais LLP in Calgary, member of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Advisory Council on National Security, as well as numerous high profile civilian appointments, Mr. McCrank is well poised to fill this role.

Mr. McCrank will have a big set of shoes to fill. He replaces Dr. David Bercuson, OC, who has held the position since 2002. HLCol Bercuson has been a stalwart supporter of the Canadian Forces and vocal in promoting the well-being of the Regiment. Dr. Bercuson will continue in his civilian position as Director of the Center of Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary.

41 CER was created in September 2008 through the amalgamation of Edmonton's 8th Field Engineer Regiment and Calgary's 33rd Field Engineer Squadron. The primary role of military engineers is to allow friendly forces to live, to move and to fight on the battlefield while denying those same abilities to the enemy.

41 CER currently provides engineer support to Alberta's 41 Canadian Brigade Group. Its members have served with honour and distinction on numerous overseas deployments, and over two dozen have completed operational deployments in Afghanistan.

The Regiment is based in Edmonton and is composed of a Regimental Headquarters, 25 Engineer Squadron in Edmonton and 33 Engineer Squadron in Calgary.

THE CALGARY HIGHLANDERS

Change of Command for the The Calgary Highlanders



41 CBG Commander Colonel Paul Bury with Lieutenant Colonel Mike Vernon and the new commanding officer of the Calgary Highlanders, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Owens.



Lieutenant Colonel Mike Vernon, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Owens and Pipe Major Michael Giles on the Mewata Parade Square during the Change of Command Parade

SOUTH ALBERTA LIGHT HORSE

SALH opens Regimental Museum to the Public



Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, His Honour, Colonel (Retired) the Honourable Donald S. Ethell takes the salute from the South Alberta Light Horse Regiment during the Grand Opening of the South Alberta Light Horse Regimental Museum on November 13th 2010.

In a ceremony held on November 13, 2010, A Squadron and B Squadron, The South Alberta Light Horse (Royal Canadian Armoured Corps) officially opened the South Alberta Light Horse Regimental Museum. The Regimental roots began in Medicine Hat as the first militia cavalry unit raised in 1905.

Prior to the opening, the Parade Square was ringed with current and historical vehicles and equipment, featuring the vintage South Alberta Regiment's World War II M3 Halftrack Command Post 'Old Reliable'.

The Regimental Ceremonial Troop, in period dress, joined the Alberta Old Guard and Affiliated Cadet Corps on parade when the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, His Honour, Colonel (Retired) the Honourable Donald S. Ethell took the salute from the Regiment, and

presented several soldiers with Canadian Forces and Regimental Medals.

His Honour then took part in the official ribbon cutting ceremony, immediately following the parade.

Also in attendance were the Minister of the Environment and MLA for Medicine Hat, the Honourable Rob Renner, His Worship Mayor Norm Boucher and the Commander of 41 Canadian Brigade Group, Colonel Paul Bury.

As soldiers of Alberta's senior militia regiment, the South Alberta Light Horse have distinguished themselves on important domestic operations such as the Medicine Hat flood in 1995 and the BC forest fires in 2004, and who continue to serve overseas with regular force units on international missions

18 AIR DEFENCE REGIMENT

Lethbridge MLA Rick Casson kicks off Coffee for Troops Campaign



The Hon. Rick Casson, Member of Parliament for Lethbridge has a cup of coffee with Bombardier Adam Addison, Bombardier Dave Merrick, Gunner John Mankow and Captain Scott Dawson launching the second annual "Send your Support...In a Cup of Coffee" campaign on November 9th 2010.

A taste of home at Christmas can go a long way.

On November 9th 2010, the Honourable Rick Casson, Member of Parliament for Lethbridge launched the second annual "Send your Support... In a Cup of Coffee" campaign at Vimy Ridge Armoury with members of 18th Air Defence.

The campaign goal is to raise 2,900 Tim Hortons five gift dollar cards to give to Canadian Forces members in Afghanistan to use at the KAF Tim Hortons.

In 2009, the first "Send your Support...In a Cup of Coffee" campaign had a modest goal of 500 cards. The campaign was greatly supported by the Lethbridge community, raising 3,000 of the five dollar gift cards for CF personnel.

To date, the "Send your Support... In a Cup of Coffee" campaign has raised just over 1000 cards for Canadian Forces personnel in Afghanistan.

UPCOMING 41 CBG EVENTS

CFB SHILO 29 APRIL - 9 MAY 2011

EX WD11

EXERCISE WESTERN DEFENDER 2011



BASIC WINTER WARFARE

In December 2010, members of 41 Canadian Brigade Group will be heading North of 60 to conduct basic winter warfare training in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

Find out more from your chain of command.

STAND TO is a bimonthly newsletter produced by 41 CBG Public Affairs.
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