



COMMISSIONAIRES

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The Corpsrespondent

~ Newsletter of Hamilton Division - Autumn 2008 ~

YEAR END

At this time of year we have experienced going through another Year End and can show some pleasant retrospective observations. Our Year end coincides with the Federal year which assists in administering some of our contracts and does not upset anything else. In an operational sense and for accounting purposes as well as to comply with some contract provisions, the same timing is required. At that time we have an annual Audit completed by our Chartered Accountant.

The Audit is comprised of several facets. As is normally expected, the financial aspects of our business in the Hamilton Division are assessed and commented upon. In addition to those financial considerations, which are the most important part of the Audit we are required by the Federal Government to report on the number of persons qualified as Veterans we have working on Federal Contracts. Drafts of the Audit are examined by our Finance Committee and when acceptable the entire Audit proceedings are put before our entire Board for approval. As may be expected all this takes some time after the date of the year end. This is most of the reason that the determination of whether there may be any Surplus available for us all cannot be made until sometime after the actual year end.

The other factor reported upon by our auditor is our Veteran status. The Corps of Commissionaires across Canada has had the privilege since 1945 of having a First Right of Refusal on all Federal contracts in which we may be able to provide a service. Initially we were all to have been Veterans but now the availability of Veterans for a number of reasons is less. Our contracts with the government are administered by the Public Works and Government Services Canada. They also have recognized the fact that there are fewer veterans and have reduced the requirements placed on us to some extent. They still require that at least 60% of our personnel working on federal jobs be veterans. In Hamilton we are able to keep up with the requirement but it is difficult. We value our Veteran members and not just for that reason and we seek as many as possible all the time in order to keep our Federal jobs.

In order to help in this endeavour it would be helpful if you would mention us to your Veteran friends who may be looking for some employment.

By way of report on our operations and financial position we are able and pleased to say that we have had another successful year. These results are due solely to all the Commissionaires working in all the contract locations. We have also changed some of our operational methods through this past year. This has helped in making our year better but more particularly it has helped our contacts with all our Commissionaires and our clients. Because of the efforts you all make we receive praise from those clients which assists in keeping contracts and where possible attracting new clients. Generally we seek to do several things: keep clients and raise our contract prices while keeping the hours worked up. Most importantly we want to increase the wages we can pay as a result of those contracts.

Again I would like to express my thanks and congratulations to all our Commissionaires. I am aware that there are some areas in which we may improve and I assure you that they are not forgotten.

Commandant

**PRIME MINISTER HARPER
HONOURS RHLI DIEPPE VETERANS**
By Colonel James Forsyth, CStJ, CD, Past Chair - Hamilton Division



Col. Jim Forsyth escorts Prime Minister Stephen Harper during his visit to the Dieppe Memorial on August 19th.

On 19 August 1942, The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry took part in the raid on the French Port of Dieppe. The purpose of the raid was to see if a French port could be captured intact, and also to take some pressure off the Russians on the Eastern Front. Canadian troops were expecting a relatively easy time of it, but the battle turned into a nightmare and was a complete disaster, with 90% of the 6,000 men of the 2nd Canadian Division being killed, captured or wounded. The RHLI suffered 197 soldiers killed that day out of the 582 who stormed the beach. Only 211 returned to England, with 109 of them wounded. A further 174, including 85 wounded, could not be evacuated and became prisoners-of-war.

Each year, on 19 August, the RHLI Veterans Association holds a memorial service at the Dieppe Veterans Memorial Park on Beach Boulevard for those who served and died at Dieppe. This year, the Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, was invited to attend and he readily accepted. He was introduced to the six Dieppe veterans who were able to attend, and he had a brief word with each one before the service.

During the service, Mr. Harper laid a wreath on behalf of the Government and citizens of Canada in recognition of the 197 men of Hamilton and surrounding communities who died that day.

After the service, Mr. Harper met and chatted with many of the 300-350 people who attend the service before he had to depart. The veterans were greatly honoured and pleased with the PM's visit, and for his recognition of their service, dedication and sacrifices for Canada and Hamilton during the Dieppe Raid, some 66 years ago.

~ LAST POST ~

We are saddened to report the passing of two members of our Commissionaires family.

Comm. Grant O'Neill - 64, whose most recent employment was with CCIW in Burlington, passed away on September 6th, 2008 after a lengthy illness.

Comm. Roy Vaillancourt - 62, was a familiar figure at Home Hardware in St. Jacobs. He passed on August 31st, 2008

We express our sincere sympathy to family and friends of these veteran Commissionaires

Commissionaire Profile ~ Comm. Robert (Bert) Brown, CD ~

It is a rational expectation of traveling by airplane that the number of times one experiences the landing phase of a flight will substantially equal the number of takeoffs. Not so with Comm. Bert Brown. While he cannot recall the precise number of take-offs he has enjoyed he can say that the number of landings is 1067 fewer. The occasions when he arrived on terra-firma without the airplane were, of course, accomplished by parachute. Bert's very first "jump" (*you don't actually jump... you sort of step out and gravity does the rest*) happened on 22 May 1961 when he first abandoned a perfectly good airplane and beat it to the ground by several minutes. In the following years he 'raced airplanes to a safe landing' on hundreds of occasions. As an active skydiver he performed, with his colleagues in the Hamilton Sport Parachute Club, in hundreds of air shows, fall fairs and other outdoor events. A few years ago his knees told him it was time to pack-up parachuting and that's precisely what he does now ... pack parachutes. As a licensed parachute rigger Bert spends his Saturdays repacking and certifying parachutes at a facility at the Canadian Warplane Heritage museum. When asked about Bert's proficiency in packing parachutes his colleague replies with a grin that there have "*never been any complaints.*"

Bert Brown is a retired member of the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals in which he served for about 16 years. He has a particularly pleasant memory of being assigned as a sergeant Instructor under the Special Militia Training Plan created by the Deifenbaker government in the early 1960's. They were called *Deifenbaker's Warriors* and received the munificent sum of \$275.00 a month. As Bert recalls it paid for gas, car insurance and beer. He is currently president of the Hamilton Signals Association.

Of course not all his days have involved skydiving or in the Army Reserve. For 28 years he was employed in the drafting department at Canadian Westinghouse. He retired some years ago and was employed on the staff of the CWH Museum for a number of years prior to joining Hamilton Division in May of 1995. He has served in a variety of postings including Mohawk College and the Canada Centre for Inland Waters. Currently Comm. Bert Brown serves as a spare.

He has been awarded The **Canadian Forces Decoration (CD)**, the **Canada 125 Medal** and, more recently, the **Commissionaires Long Service Medal** which, in the photo at left he is shown receiving from his wife Mary.



Bert Brown inspects and refolds the panels of a semi-steerable parachute. (*editor's note ... It's my chute. And I have never complained*)



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This short message is reprinted from *TOP HEALTH ~ Health and Wellness Newsletter. We Care About Your Health*

Walking can add years to your life and Life to your years. And it couldn't be easier. You don't need to join a health club, wear special equipment or go into training to Reap the rewards.

THE CONDITIONER: Walking conditions your heart and lungs and improves your body's ability to use oxygen more efficiently. **Fact:** In one study, women who walked briskly (3 - 4 mph) at least three hours a week cut their risk of heart attack and stroke by more than half.

THE PROTECTOR: Walking helps beat other health problems too. It reduces your risk of some forms of cancer and osteoporosis. It fights the battle of the bulge, reducing body fat and building muscle. Walking can even help people with diabetes reduce or eliminate their need for medication.

THE JOINT-SAVER: Walking can burn about as many calories per mile as jogging does. But it delivers less of a jolt, so it's much easier on your joints and muscles.

THE DE-STRESSOR: Walking is easy on your mind too, since it lessens stress and lightens depression. Beginning walkers usually report that they feel and sleep better and that their mental outlook improves.

THE WINNER: best of all, walking has the lowest dropout rate of any form of exercise. So you are more likely to stick with it and get all these benefits and more, like better digestion, improved regularity and lower blood pressure.

THERE'S NOTHING TO IT: Just put on a sturdy and comfortable pair of shoes and go. **Smart moves:** Walk to the store for the Sunday paper; park a few blocks from work or get off the bus or train one stop early and walk from there; use the stairs instead of the elevator; on bad weather days walk in the mall.

Thanks to Don Clannon for providing this important message. When I "Googled" the subject under 'walking as an exercise' I was amazed at the wealth of valuable information and advice available to aspiring walkers. We hope the message is of interest to all and inspirational to most.

Editor