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Volume 58 Issue 4



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February 21, 2019

**INSIDE**  
This Issue



High Readiness training commences. Page 3



2PPCLI welcomes new CO during parade. Page 6



1RCHA padre looks at CAF diversity. Page 9



**Ex FROZEN GUNNER**



Despite frigid conditions on some days, 1RCHA was able to test their artillery skills during the annual Ex FROZEN GUNNER. This winter's edition allowed 1CMBG Commander Col Bob Ritchie to observe 1RCHA in action as they tested the Precision Guided Kit (PGK) for the inaugural time. 1RCHA adjutant Capt Mia Garton said the PGK is an addition to the M777 ammunition components to increase precision of rounds. Up next is Ex MAPLE RESOLVE for 1RCHA, and 2PPCLI. For the story, see page 2.

*Photos Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag*

## Ex FROZEN GUNNER

# Frigid temperatures do not deter 1RCHA from training

**Jules Xavier**  
Shilo Stag

1RCHA's latest exercise in the training area lived up to its name, thanks to Mother Nature blessing us with more snowfall plus the arrival of another Arctic Vortex.

Ex FROZEN GUNNER finished up Feb. 17, with the artillery and soldiers returned to the gun lines the following day.

With temperatures ranging from -14 C to -54 C, there were challenges in the field for soldiers and equipment. However, this did not deter 1RCHA from using the Precision Guided Kit (PGK) for the inaugural time.

According to 1RCHA adjutant Capt Mia Garton, who invited the *Stag* out to the training area Feb. 12 to observe the PGK being used for the first time by A Bty, the PGK is an addition to the M777 ammunition components to increase precision of rounds.

While the attachment is placed on the top of the round, in fact, Capt Garton explained it is on the fuse.

"The purpose of the PGK engagement was to establish and confirm, for the Royal Canadian Artillery, the technical procedures and SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) for this new capability," offered Capt Mike Crosier, the RCPO with 1RCHA's HQ and Svc Bty.

With a loud explosion at dawn, with the temperature sitting at a balmy -16 C compared to the past weekend, the M777 operated by Gunners with A Bty, the first round using the PGK went off without a hitch. The lone Gunner to the right of the M777 dusted himself off from the snowy debris kicked up by the concussion from the artillery round heading downfield.

A second round was fired, before the M777 was reclined as DLR technicians out to observe the PGK being fired inspected data, and soldiers did some fine tuning of their weapons. Capt Crosier acknowledged no new data regarding the use of PGK was collected as this engagement as part of Ex FROZEN GUNNER marked the first time a unit used the PGK for their own training purposes instead of a technical/trial engagement.



A Precision Guided Kit is added to the M777 shell prior to firing during Ex FROZEN GUNNER.

Photo Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag

"They did, however, collect our firing data and will be testing it using MET GM [Meteorological Global Model] in an effort to prove its comparative effectiveness to MET CM [Meteorological Computer Message]."

"1RCHA however confirmed TTPs [Technical Training Procedures] and SOPs [Standard Operating Procedures] which will be adopted and used on future [exercises]. This capability will not be employed live on Ex MAPLE RESOLVE however it will be employed in a dry manner."

The MET GM and MET CM both generate firing corrections in order to improve 1RCHA's accuracy using the M777.

While an AAR (After Action Report) has yet to be conducted as Ex FROZEN GUNNER was ongoing during the Stag's visit to the Base's training area, points have only been noted at this time.

1RCHA was not chosen to launch the PDK during Ex FROZEN GUNNER, according to Capt Crosier.

"We acquired this capability ourselves as it does not have established TTPs and SOPs so we took the initiative to establish and confirm them."

He added, "Although a solid confirmation in cold weather conditions, the PGK is a simple and flexible capability which can function in any type of environment."

During the early morning artillery training, 1RCHA welcomed visitors from Minnesota, with three US National Guard arriving here the night before.

"They requested to observe our shoot as they too will be adopting this capability this summer," noted Capt Crosier. "The intent of the visit was to observe our TTPs and employment methods, IOT [In Order To] aid in establishing their own."

With another Ex FROZEN GUNNER now history, 1RCHA will turn its attention to preparing for a longer spring exercise in CFB Wainwright this spring.

The batteries will be joined on the road trip to Alberta by 2PPCLI, where the combined forces will be immersed in further Road to High Readiness training during annual Ex MAPLE RESOLVE.

## See more photos from Ex FROZEN GUNNER page 12

## Pet of the Week

### Mr. Fin

Meagan Flegel's four-year-old Yorkshire Terrier is named Mr. Fin. She says the family just moved here from British Columbia last November. Mr. Fin is currently adjusting to the prairie weather. Do you have a photo of your pet — cat, dog, bird, snake, hamster — you'd like to share with our *Stag* readers? If so, e-mail it to us via [stag@mymts.net](mailto:stag@mymts.net)



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## On the Road to High Readiness Canadian Patrol Concentration puts CAF soldiers to the test

**Tim Bryant**  
Stag Special

Being able to conduct an effective patrol is a key skill for any soldier.

It is with that in mind that the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre (CMTC) at CFB Wainwright welcomed troops from across Canada and abroad to put their winter warfare skills to the test during the biannual Canadian Patrol Concentration (CPC).

"The Canadian Patrol Concentration takes the essence of what it means to be a soldier, compresses that into two days, and then stretches it over 40 kilometres. It's a superb opportunity for soldiers to show their skills and what they're made of," said CMTC RSM CWO Eric Poissant in a press release.

The 2018 CPC ran from Nov. 15 to 25, and drew 17 teams from Canada — five from each of 2nd, 3rd and 4th Canadian Divisions, and two from 5th Canadian Division. Seven international teams, which included two Dutch teams and one each from Italy, Latvia, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States. To complete the CPC course, teams were tasked with conducting a 40-kilometre patrol through the CFB Wainwright training area, essentially cut off from the rest of the world and completely immersed in the scenario, explained CMTC PAO Lt Matthew House.

They were not permitted to have any technology with them beyond the basics of a patrol kit.

They were required to navigate the course with only a compass, map and their own orienteering skills, so no personal phones or GPS devices to map where they were permitted.

In fact, when the teams got to their final pre-course camp, they were searched to ensure they did not try to sneak assistive technology onto the course.

However, the teams were provided with a GPS transmitter so their locations could be tracked by the CPC "game mas-

ters," and in case of an emergency requiring medical assistance and/or extraction from the course.

The CPC was run and monitored out of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), headed by LCol Mark Lubiniecki, who explained that for 2018, the CPC scenario was designed to replicate patrolling a demilitarized zone (DMZ) in the border region between an Allied nation and a hostile state. The hostile state was doing incursions into the DMZ, and the patrols were to keep watch over what was going on.

Teams follow a general course with objectives, but it was not an "event-based" task — it was not a race to reach and complete the objectives quickly. Instead, the objectives were "hidden" in interactions

the teams encountered, and there was no way to be sure an interaction was an objective. While there were set objectives with times attached — for example, rendezvous with a friendly force within a specific time window— teams

were tasked with being thorough and effective above all.

LCol Lubiniecki also explained the JOC kept tabs on the teams' progress, and could reroute teams if they got too close to the one in front of them. The teams were not able to interact with each other, to maintain the integrity of the event.

He outlined the general course a team competing in the CPC would follow.

First, a team was flown or driven into the insertion location to begin its patrol. While on patrol, each team would have to meet up with friendly forces and conduct a reconnaissance of the area.

At one point, the team was loaded into friendly force trucks, which would be ambushed by the enemy, complete with battle simulation explosives (BATSIM) to make the simulation as real as possible. At this point, the team needed to repel the enemy, secure the area and treat the wounded.

"The ambush really tests leadership at all levels," said LCol Lubiniecki.

See **SOLDIERS** page 10

Members from the composite team of the Royal Canadian Regiment conduct fire drills at CFB Wainwright during the Canadian Patrol Concentration.

Photo Able Seaman Camden Scott/Army PA

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**Submitting articles and photos for print:**

- Please submit articles as a MS Word Document.
- Include the author's full name, rank, unit and contact information.
- Include photos with your articles whenever possible, however, do not embed photos in word documents.
- Please submit photos as high resolution jpegs (if scanned 300 dpi), digital images or in hard copy format.
- With photos, include a caption that names the individuals in the photo; what is taking place; and the name, rank, and unit of the photographer.

• • •

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5Div soldiers at CFB Gagetown practice breaching skills and using a chainsaw as part of a course of Assault Pioneer training last fall. Assault Pioneers are infantry units who receive training in engineering skills that help maintain mobility in the field. This capability is being reintroduced into the Canadian Army in order to reduce the demands on busy Combat Engineer regiments and give infantry units their own, built-in engineering capabilities. *Photo Cpl Roger Simard/CA*



## Assault Pioneers return to Canadian Army

**Steven Fouchard**  
 Stag Special

The Canadian Army (CA) is re-introducing a capability to its ranks that is both steeped in tradition and thoroughly modern.

Assault Pioneers are infantry troops with additional specialized training in field engineering tasks — like breaching doors with explosives — which until recently have been the sole responsibility of Combat Engineers. The reintroduction of Assault Pioneers to infantry battalions will guarantee they have built-in engineer support capabilities.

Post-Cold War thinking in the CA had it that this duplication was not cost-efficient, so those tasks were given back to combat engineer regiments.

Capt Colton Morris, an instructor at the CA's infantry school in Oromocto, New Brunswick who helped design the new Assault Pioneer course, explained that senior leaders have since come to see value in pioneer training.

"Engineers have a huge envelope of things that they're responsible for," he said. "And without the Assault Pioneers, they've been saying, 'We have many tasks and in order for us to maintain all those skills, we're running ourselves ragged.' Engineers and Assault Pioneers complement each other."

Recent field experience has also demonstrated the value of Assault Pioneers, he added. Since the completion of Op ATHENA in Afghanistan in 2005, the CA has put greater emphasis on Light Forces — nimble and highly mobile combat units such as 3PPCLI.

LGen Paul Wynnyk, when he was CA Commander, gave direction that clearly defines the unique benefits of Assault Pioneers to Light Forces in allowing the CA to effectively respond to when called upon.

"The new version of the Assault Pioneers will assist in

maintaining mobility in complex terrain," he said. "So that means in mountains and, particularly now, in urban environments where skills like breaching come into play.

"Right now that task is solely held by the engineers. They have to do things like fortify buildings, clear roadways, move obstructions and all sorts of other stuff. They don't have the personnel to augment the infantry."

The course is available to infantry soldiers from both the Regular and Reserve Forces, offering them an additional opportunity for professional development.

Four courses were conducted at the infantry school last summer. Capt Morris noted it has been decentralized from there and will be conducted individually by various units, including Reserve regiments, throughout 2019.

"The intention is to increase retention," said Capt Morris. "By bringing the Assault Pioneers back, we open up other options for privates, corporals, junior leaders — and even officers — to expand their breadth of experience."

The military pioneer concept dates back to the days of the Roman Empire, when they cleared a path for advancing forces by, for example, clearing forest with axes or building roads. In Commonwealth tradition, Assault Pioneers have always worn beards, unlike most of their comrades.

The origins of this practice are less clear, although Capt Morris said there are stories of British Assault Pioneers who were tasked with parading before Queen Victoria at short notice. The story goes that they were left without sufficient time to fully groom themselves before the parade.

"Being part of this is exciting," added Capt Morris. "In six or seven years, as I've moved along my career, I'll be able to say, 'We have Assault Pioneers again and I was part of that.'"

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# CAF looking for clearance divers

## Stag Special

Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members interested in becoming clearance divers will be able to learn more during information sessions being held at Bases and Wings across Canada this month and during March.

Clearance divers operate in a variety of environments, both at home and abroad, from the Arctic to the deserts of Afghanistan.

Their primary mission is to locate, identify and neutralize explosive ordnance and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) whether under the sea, on land, during times of peace or in combat.

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Transfer (CT) to become a clearance diver are now open to all regular and reserve force CAF members (Non-Commissioned) from any occupation, with or without previous dive training/qualification.

Candidates must be OFP-qualified in their current occupation, meet the medical and fitness requirements, and have 48 months of continuous service.

The clearance diver occupation has a long and storied history. The first units were formed during the Second World War to disarm sea mines throughout Europe and the South Pacific.

From their auspicious beginnings, clearance divers have been at the forefront of Royal Canadian Navy and CAF operations throughout the world, including operations in Afghanistan, Baltics, and more recently, Ukraine.

Consider becoming a part of one of the most thrilling, challenging, and rewarding occupations in the CAF. Any CAF member interested in finding out how to become a clearance diver is invited to attend.

CFB Shilo's visit by recruiters is March 11 at the MPTF, with two sessions running 2 to 4 p.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.

## NEXT HOME GAME



Feb. 22 vs Saskatoon 7:30 p.m.


March 13 vs Moose Jaw 7 p.m.

March 16 vs Regina 7:30 p.m.

2018-2019 COM REC HOCKEY STANDING											
TEAM	GP	W	L	T	R/S	F	GF	GA	PTS	%	
B BTY	10	8	1	1	5		86	39	17	0.850	
Z BTY	6	4	2		7		45	29	8	0.667	
BASE	13	6	4	3	1		48	53	15	0.577	
2VP (B)	10	5	4	1	3		67	61	11	0.550	
A BTY	13	6	4	2	2	1	82	88	14	0.538	
2VP (A)	11	3	7		3	1	58	74	6	0.273	
HQ&SVCS BTY	10	1	8	1	4		39	76	3	0.150	

COM REC HOCKEY TOP SCORERS					
NAME	Team	GP	Goals	Assists	Points
Bdr Carroll	B Bty	14	32	19	51
Bdr Pappas	Z Bty	9	22	13	35
Pte Souliere-Dunn	2PPCLI (A)	10	16	15	31
Gnr Timm	B Bty	10	17	12	29
Bdr Lafleche	B Bty	12	6	22	28
Gnr Gamble	Z Bty	9	8	13	21


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Cannabis consumption is prohibited by a CAF member during the following periods:

Period of Prohibition	Duty
<b>8HRS</b> Cannabis consumption during the 8 hours before any known or expected performance of ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any duty (defined as any duty, training, exercise, parade or service that is military in nature.)</li> </ul>
<b>24HRS</b> Cannabis consumption during the 24 hours before any known or expected performance of ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operation or handling of a loaded weapon, ammunition, explosive ordnance or explosive;</li> <li>operation or handling of a weapon system;</li> <li>a scheduled base emergency response duty, including firefighting or medical first response by military police, a firefighter or a medical technician assigned to medical first response duty;</li> <li>a scheduled operational exercise or collective training;</li> <li>operation of a wheeled or tracked vehicle, or mobile support equipment;</li> <li>servicing, loading, testing or involvement in maintaining a military aircraft or a component of a military aircraft;</li> <li>training as a candidate for the basic military qualification or basic military officer qualification and not restricted from leave;</li> <li>parachuting, rappelling or fast roping activities;</li> <li>maintenance or packing of parachuting, rappelling or fast roping equipment;</li> <li>operation of a laser of class 3B, 3R or 4, as classified under the American National Standards Institute Z136.1, Safe Use of Lasers; or</li> <li>operation of a fuel farm or handling of bulk petroleum.</li> </ul>
<b>28DAYS</b> Cannabis consumption during the 28 days before any known or expected performance of ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operating in a hyperbaric environment, i.e. diving, submarine service or use of a hyperbaric chamber;</li> <li>high altitude parachuting from a height of or above 13,000 feet (3,962 metres) above mean sea level;</li> <li>service as a member of a crew of a military aircraft as a pilot, air combat systems officer, flight engineer, airborne electronic sensor operator, observer, loadmaster, jumpmaster, search and rescue technician, air technician, air gunner, air marshal, tactical aircraft security officer, flight test engineer, flight attendant, flight steward, flight surgeon, flight nurse or aeromedical evacuation technician;</li> <li>controlling or directing an aerospace platform or asset; or</li> <li>operation of an unmanned aerial system.</li> </ul>
Enduring and total prohibition on cannabis consumption during the entire period of ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an international operation, exercise or collective training, other than any period of authorized leave in Canada; or</li> <li>an OUTCAN posting, other than any period of authorized leave in Canada.</li> </ul>

Learn more: DAOD 9004-1, Use of Cannabis by CAF Members

# ‘Operationally focused’ battalion welcomes new CO

## LCol Jay MacKeen passes command to LCol Mike Reekie

**Jules Xavier**  
Shilo Stag

A trip to Disney is in the offing for LCol Jay MacKeen’s sons Caden and Connor when he returns to Canada following his latest overseas posting.

“To my wife Lindsay, and my two boys, when I took command [at 2PPCLI] I said that a thank-you isn’t enough for all that you have done and continue to do in support of me and my career,” said LCol MacKeen during his Change of Command (CoC) parade speech at the MPTF. “Nothing has changed — you give me the strength to continue to serve.

“Please know that any success I have had in uniform is simply a result of the great support you have given me — and boys, I promise that after this next deployment and the posting back to where ever we end up next, a trip to Disney is in order. I’ve said it publicly, so there’s no backing out.”

As the 32nd CO of 2PPCLI, LCol MacKeen is leaving his command early for the next chapter in a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) career that started in 1997 when he was a primary reservist with the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa. Instead of a summer CoC, he passed the reigns to LCol Mike Reekie in winter so the new CO can prepare alongside his soldiers during the Road to High Readiness training now underway prior to deployments starting July 1.

“Today is not an easy day for me,” said LCol MacKeen. “I love this battalion and everything that it stands for. So, having to say goodbye is difficult.

“That said, I do take solace in knowing that it’s LCol Mike Reekie who is relieving me.”

LCol MacKeen pointed out to his attentive audience at the MPTF that LCol Reekie is no stranger to the Second Battalion.

“In my opinion, I cannot think of a better person to come at the height of our deployment training and lead the battalion next summer on what is an incredible strategic mission.

“What I know for certain is you are taking command of an operationally focused battalion that is not only capable, resilient and proven to be incredibly flexible, but is absolutely ready to respond to whatever challenges lay ahead. Regardless of what is asked of the battalion, know they will deliver.”

LCol Reekie started his CAF career in 1998, initially serving in the Royal Westminster Regiment. When transferred to the Regular Force, he was posted 2PPCLI — this will be his third posting with 2VP.

He has served overseas in Bosnia as a platoon commander, in Kandahar as a LAV captain, in Kabul as a company commander, and in Iraq with a Special Operations Task Force.

His key staff experiences include service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, Special Operations Forces Command, and the Joint Opera-



Outgoing CO LCol Jay MacKeen passes the colours to incoming CO LCol Mike Reekie during a 2PPCLI Change of Command ceremony held at the MPTF. The colour party (below) prepares to march on to the parade square as 2PPCLI soldiers salute their colours.

*Photos Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag*



tions Command.

His list of completed courses include Army Operations, Combat Team Commanders’, and the Joint Command and Staff programs.

Married to Charissa, the 33rd 2PPCLI CO has two children.

With the colours passed from LCol MacKeen to LCol Reekie, the outgoing CO had no advice for his fellow Patricia.

“Only a request,” he said, “that you keep smiling and enjoy the privilege that is now and rightly yours — command of our Regiment’s Second Battalion. As you know, they truly are second to none.”

Learning of his next posting had LCol MacKeen contemplating how he would say goodbye “to a unit that I have grown to love.”

“For those of you that are in or have had

the privilege of command, you know that it is not an easy question to answer.”

He pointed out two guests at the CoC, including the reviewing officer Col Bob Ritchie, Commander of 1CMBG, and BGen Mike Wright, now the COS with Canadian Forces Intelligence Command. Both are former 2PPCLI COs, with BGen Wright serving June 2011 to June 2013, and Col Ritchie June 2013 to June 2015.

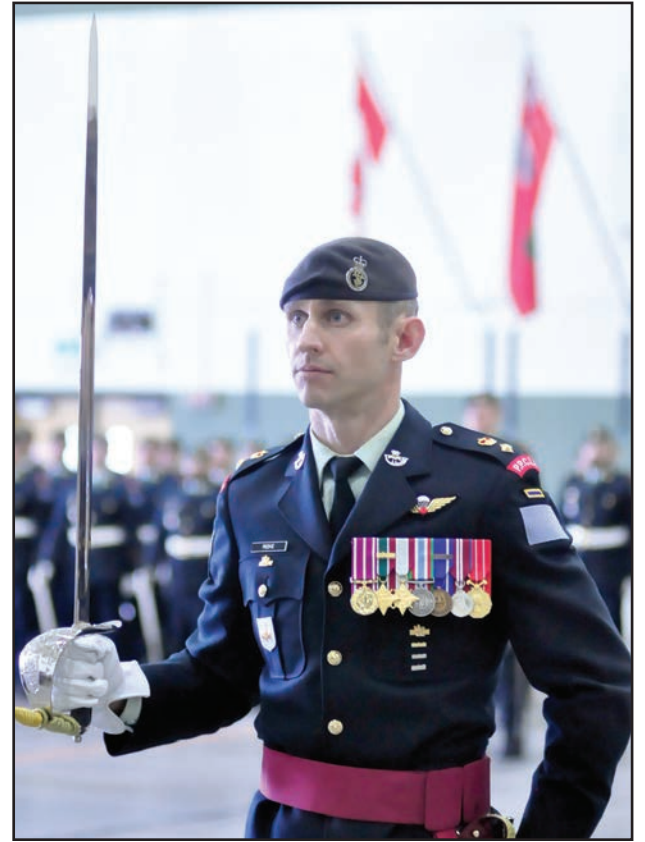
LCol MacKeen is especially thankful of being given the opportunity to command 2PPCLI, but it is the men and women of 2PPCLI who garnered his applause during his speech.

“When I say that soldiering with you has been the greatest experience of my career, know that I mean it,” he said. “More importantly, know that although it may have been my signature on the orders — I, as well as everyone in attendance, knows that it was you, our soldiers, that delivered on everything we were asked to do.”

He added, “You did so to an incredible standard. Whether it was the UK public duties, where we also had to lay to rest the Countess Mountbatten, the combat team commander course, where we trained the next generation of company leaders, deployed up in Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay for domestic high Arctic sovereignty operations — where temperatures reached ‘minus-63’ — [to] on the road to high readiness, where we trained for operations and looked to master the basics, or on the countless institutional tasks and community relations ... you excelled.”

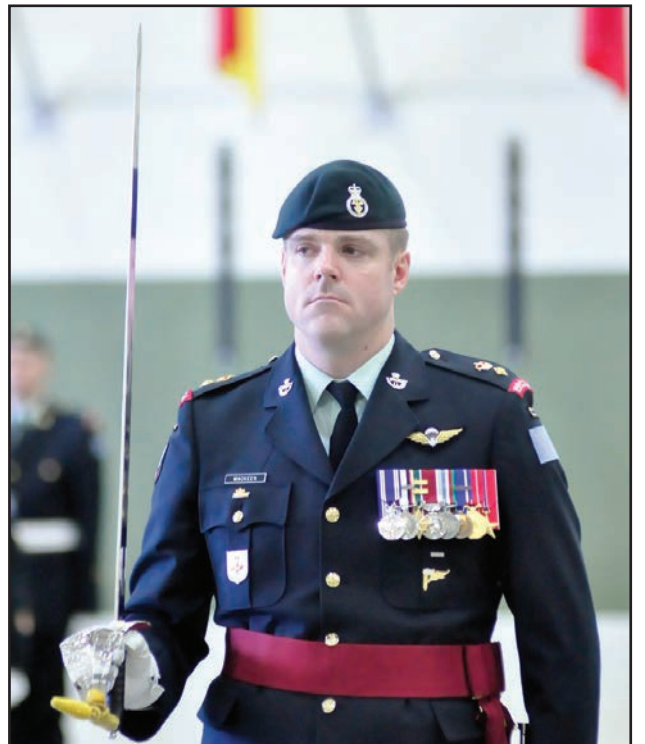
LCol MacKeen said he was appreciative of the contributions his soldiers contributed to the success of 2PPCLI under his command.

“In my humble opinion, there is something special about this unit and since coming to the battalion, I’ve tried to define it ... label it ... something that has proven to be quite a difficult task.



1CMBG Commander Col Bob Ritchie, a former 2PPCLI CO, inspects the troops (above left) during the Change of Command ceremony held at the MPTF. Incoming CO LCol Mike Reekie (left) signs the Change of Command scroll after receiving the 2VP colours from outgoing CO LCol Jay MacKeen (right). Afterwards, LCol Mike Reekie (above right) took over the parade and saluted Col Ritchie as well as former CO BGen Mike Wright, now the COS with the Canadian Forces Intelligence Command.

Photos Jules Xavier/CFB Shilo



# Brigade 'firing on all cylinders' says LCol MacKeen

From page 6

"Although some in the audience may disagree with me, I dare say that the Second Battalion is the soul of the regiment. If you accept that the definition to 'be the soul of something' means 'to be a perfect example of a particularly high quality,' then I believe the Second Battalion has that in spades."

While the Patricias' battalions have all proven themselves on countless operations, LCol MacKeen observed there are two areas where 2VP differs from the other battalions.

"The first is the most obvious — our geography. We are located in rural Canada, two provinces away from the brigade. Less our good friends 'the guns' ... but this distance and the rural setting acts as a forcing function that achieves an incredible effect. In short, it forces the battalion to organize and align itself as if it were on permanent deployment, creating tight knit bonds and an incredible trust between all ranks that I have only ever seen on long, difficult and demanding deployments.

"The second difference is our veterans. The Second is the one battalion where its founding members, those that fought at Kapyong, along with the veterans of the Cold War, Medak, Afghanistan and every operation in between and since, walk the halls not only at every unit function, like those here with us today, but routinely pop-in throughout the year ... engaging our soldiers and ensuring they know what it means to be a Patricia."

LCol MacKeen acknowledged the veterans exemplify what it means to be a member of 2PPCLI and serve Canada.

"It is they that instill a sense of pride and, coupled with our geography, approach to training, and how we develop our soldiers and leaders, create a warrior ethos I have not seen in any other battalions, unit, command or with any of our allied forces that I have served with.

"As such, I believe it is that combination and specifically, our rural setting and the outstanding work done by our veterans that makes the soldiers of the Second exceptional representatives of our regiment."

Having the support of 1CMBG did not go unnoticed by LCol MacKeen during his two-year stint at CFB Shilo.

"There is not a single activity during my tenure that this battalion has done that we have not relied on some sort of support from at least one of you. I truly felt that for those of us in 1CMBG we all hoisted aboard the 'one brigade, one team' philosophy striving to do what is right, which usually came at a personal unit expense to ensure the success of another."

Col Ritchie was thanked by LCol MacKeen for his mentorship, guidance and patience.

"Not just in your current capacity, but throughout my career. The brigade is firing on all cylinders and regardless of task, domestic or expeditionary, I know that 1CMBG is ready to answer the call. I wish you and the entirety of the brigade nothing but success in your next

bounds."

BComd LCol David MacIntyre and the extended CFB Shilo family also were thanked by LCol MacKeen.

"You are exactly that, family," he said. "You support the battalion day-in, and day-out, making sure the unit is positioned on a solid footing so that [soldiers] can step off and do what is needed. I'll simply say your entire teams support was appreciated by me, and I know it will be by LCol Reekie."

LCol MacKeen offered kudos to his leadership team of RSM CWO King and DCO Maj Mitten.

"Because of your leadership the Second Battalion continues to force generate world class soldiers. You are both incredible leaders that have shown unbelievable dedication and professionalism. I only wish that the soldiers could see what you actually do behind the scenes as it is truly inspiring. Thank-you for your stewardship, partnership, solicited and unsolicited opinions, and most importantly, your friendship."

Later this month, LCol MacKeen will be on the road again when he will assume his new duties in Iraq as the Task Force Commander of Canada's security force capacity building efforts, which are occurring throughout the Middle East. His six-month deployment will see his leadership co-ordinate the training of Iraq's military so they can take control of their own security and defence of their own country.

Then it's a trip to Disney for the family, as promised, when he returns to Canada.

# Looking back at Shilo's photo archives



Compare today's Base HQ to what Camp Shilo had during the Second World War, when soldiers trained here prior to going overseas. This coloured postcard photo was taken in 1942. Did you know Camp Shilo had an archery range (inset)? An officer tests his archery skills while being watched by men with the RCAF.

*Chaplain Team invite you to*  
**Shrove Tuesday**

**March 5**  
**Pancake lunch**  
**Faith Centre**

**11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**Cost \$5 per person or \$15 for family 4+**  
**Children aged five and younger FREE**  
**Net proceeds for Chaplain Services Fund**







# Celebrating our CAF diversity during black history month



## Capt Joachim Nnanna Stag Special

As I look out from my office at 1RCHA and admire the impressive display of military field vehicles and assorted machinery, I wonder how I found myself ministering to the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in this setting.

I was born and raised in Nigeria — on the continent of Africa — but now proudly serve as a chaplain in the CAF. Nothing, aside from experience ever prepared me for this work within a multi-faith environment with men and women from such wide ranging diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Never did I dream there was a place with such a heterogeneous outlook that would embrace me as I am. I came from a country where everyone was more similar than different. We were a majority, Nigerian; a peoples with same skin colour, similar practices and universal cultural norms. Different was mostly unfamiliar to me.

When I came to Canada 17 years ago, it was a major shift from what I knew. I was not just another black guy. In the little community I found myself, I felt like the only black guy. And of course, I faced all the challenges that immigrants face.

As an African and minority in cultural terms, my experiences and encounters were not always positive and pleasant; especially when my skin colour is different from the general populace.

"Different" was not always met with the typical Canadian friendliness. To fit in, I had to work very hard to dilute my accent, to ignore the occasional stares from people and to refrain from being upset when I was treated differently, which did happen.

Although I was a civilian priest who ministered to people, I didn't so much feel like I belonged to Canada in those early days, and even months and years. However, fast forward to the very day I became a Canadian citizen.

Seven years after setting foot in Canada, it was the day my life transformed. After I took the oath under the red and white flag and was granted citizenship, I walked with faith inspired certainty downstairs to the DND recruiting office in Oshawa, Ont., where I asked to be signed up. I picked up the recruitment package without any hesitation.

While we don't like to think so, racial discrimination and prejudice is real in Canada and it still looms in places where it shouldn't be. While I felt and experienced it myself, much of the discrimination I experienced in this county dissipated when I joined the military.

Putting on the uniform changed the paradigm I lived. My epaulets, beret and boots boosted my sense of belonging, but more importantly, it altered who I was to others. I was no longer an immigrant, I was no longer just a black African; I was an officer in the CAF who was respected for what I could offer in my vocation.

As a chaplain, who could be sent to any element, I quickly became a morale booster, a hope merchant and a colleague to journey with others. What seemed to weave it all together was that I was a serving member, holding the Queen's Commission with the greatest of honour and servitude. While racism still exists, the awareness around discrimination is heightening each day. We often take for granted the diversity we celebrate as Canadians and particularly in the CAF and how diversity enriches us individually and collectively.

We live and breathe our cultural mosaic identity daily because so many of us know nothing else. We often think that our Canadian value of inclusiveness is the norm in other parts of the world, but when it comes to diversity and celebrating our differences, while we are not yet perfect, Canada has come a long way and stands out as a country to emulate. When I deployed on Op PROJECTION with the Navy in 2017, I had the privilege of encountering and working with sailors from other countries. During various friendly navies and diplomatic visits, the constant question I kept getting was, "How come they allowed you in their Navy?" To which I would always respond, "Whose Navy?"

I would proudly explain that I am Canadian like any other sailor you see on that ship and they see me as such.

I often pondered the reason for this question and this curiosity from others, and I came to realize that Canada is one of the few countries in the world where with dedication and hard work, an immigrant can rise to any height.

In my interaction with sailors from other countries, I didn't encounter anybody who was "different" or stood out from the homogeneous ethnicity and thus it was evident to me that this honouring of diversity is one of the beauties of Canada.

One other remarkable thing I noticed during Op PROJECTION in '17 is that in every country we visited, be it the Philippines, South Korea, China, Japan or Malaysia there was always a Canadian sailor whose was originally from the area and was ready to serve as a translator and a sort of unofficial cultural advisor.

This amazed sailors from other nations and is a testament to the rich human resources we have in Canada. As an African, I am able to share the values I bring with me to Canada and to the CAF. Among these values are a strong sense of community, optimism about life, unwavering reverence for the sacred, respect for elders and duly constituted authority, unwavering loyalty to one's tribe, which in my case now happens to be Canada, laughter and joy as an antidote to all life's problems and a sense of pride in ones roots.

These values colour my every interaction with soldiers and shapes the way I deal with others. As far as I am concerned, we live in the best country in the world and I am privileged to be an officer in the CAF. As we celebrate black history month and highlight the achievements by black people in our history as a country and our military, we celebrate also our collective resolve to continue to make this country a place for realization of dreams.

As a chaplain in the CAF, I have the privilege of providing ministry of presence to members, advocate on matters of morale and welfare, advise the chain of command on moral and ethical matters, offer religious area assessment during deployment and provide training on spiritual resilience. I deploy with members to share in their lives while facing the same hardships they endure. I also get to perform my priestly sacramental duties at the CAF chapels where I am posted and whether I am ministering to male or female, young or old, religious or non-religious, of whatever ethnic background or sexual orientation, I know



CAPT JOACHIM  
NNANNA

that I am ministering to a Canadian who should be treated with the dignity and respect. As I write this, I have my military kits all ready to deploy on Ex FROZEN GUNNER. As the name sounds, this is a winter warfare exercise that trains soldiers to fight in austere winter condition.

While in the field, my task is to be a visible reminder of the presence of the Divine. My ability to share in soldier suffering makes me legitimate and trustworthy when it comes to counselling soldiers and journeying with them. This black history month, I am focusing on reminding soldiers of the richness of the diversity we enjoy in this country and reminding them not to take that fact for granted.

My focus is on telling my story as one who has received more than I can ever imagine in life from this country and in the CAF.

I will remind soldiers that the values we enjoy in this country did not come without sacrifice and that our diversity is our strength. I clearly remember a conversation I had with a sailor who was lamenting about having to scrub down the ship's decks as we were approaching home after our lengthy deployment.

As I was basking in the euphoria of coming back to Canada, home sweet home, I was whistling and having fun with washing down the ship, this young sailor asked me why I seem to be enjoying so much doing this kind of work.

I turned to him and said, "Twenty-five years ago I didn't have a bicycle to wash, but today, I am washing Her Majesty's Canadian ship. Things are definitely looking up."

It is perspectives like this one that demonstrate a true shift in paradigm and celebration of what our opportunities through diversity bring to the table.

My story is only one. But it is a testament to who we are and who we need to continue to be as a nation and as a national defence organization, As I nurse the frost nips I received from Ex FROZEN GUNNER, I take solace in the fact that I was training to be ready for deployment anywhere I might be needed as a way of giving back to Canada.

"We stand on guard for thee!"

*Capt Joachim Nnanna is Regimental chaplain with 1RCHA*

**CFB SHILO 16th annual  
Base Commander's Downhomer  
June 8 Community Centre Annex L25**

**LOBSTERFEST**

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# Soldiers learn about winter warfare

## Where's Willie?

Somewhere on the pages of this *Shilo Stag* is a picture of Willie, the Wheat Kings mascot.

Tell us on what page, in what particular advertisement Willie was found and correctly answer the following skill-testing question for your chance to win two tickets to an upcoming Wheat Kings home game in Brandon.



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What is name of the device used by 1RCHA when they fired the M777 out in the field during Ex FROZEN GUNNER?

Cut out your entry form and fax it to 204-765-3814, or scan it and e-mail to [stag@mymts.net](mailto:stag@mymts.net) or drop it off at the Stag's office at CANEX. Draw will be made on the Monday prior to game day.

From page 3

Later on the course, the team linked up with another friendly force to cross a river, before again needing to face off with the enemy.

Finally, after more patrolling on their own, the team once again encountered its friendly force allies and were extracted from the course.

At this point, the team was debriefed and recounted the lessons it learned and what it experienced to LCol Lubiniecki's team. This allowed the team to process what happened, and let CPC staff evaluate how the team performed, as well as to take those notes for use in devising the format and plan for the 2020 edition of the CPC.

LCol Lubiniecki explained he and his team want the CPC course to be challenging, but not impossible — it needs to be able to test the skills and motivation of the teams, while also encouraging the international teams to request permission from their governments to send teams in the future.

The final stage of CPC for each team was an awards ceremony where they learned how well they did. The teams are ranked, but ultimately they're competing against themselves, so there is no "winner" of the event.

Following the awards ceremony Nov. 20, in which the Latvian team was presented with its bronze certificate, patrol commander Pulkvežleitnants — NATO equivalent of Lieutenant-Colonel — Marcis Strautnieks spoke about the experience through company commander Kapteinis — NATO equivalent of Captain — Andre Bruveris.

As the first Latvian team to take part in CPC, there was a lot to take in, he said.

"We didn't know a lot of it," said Pulkvežleitnants Strautnieks. "We knew some things. We were the first guys, so now we can share the experiences about equipment, etc. We were the first and it's not an easy job. It was really challenging because you don't know 100 per cent of what you can expect. Now when the Latvian can explain to the Latvian what really goes on, it's easier."

The hardest part of the course was near the end when the team had to climb a hill.

"It shows who is who," said Pulkvežleitnants Strautnieks.

**"We have winter, but not like this weather. So it really, really gives an understanding of winter warfare."**

**Kapteinis Andre Bruveris**

Kapteinis Bruveris added he was impressed with the CPC and intended to press the Latvian armed forces to consider sending a team again.

"On behalf of the Latvians, my message will be to my high command that this is really challenging and we need to send a patrol to the CPC if we are invited, because it gives a really good opportunity to test our skills in winter warfare," he said.

"We have winter, but not like this weather. So it really, really gives an understanding of winter warfare."

Out on the training ground in the lead-up to starting their own CPC experience, Sgt Gareth Whotton from the United Kingdom spoke about what he and his team could expect. And as a five-time veteran of the CPC leading a team of raw rookies, he had some ideas.

"It will be a good experience, especially for the guys," he said. "We've got a lot of recruits here who have only finished training six months ago, so for them it's their first ever time out of the UK as part of a British force."

Having a team of new recruits would make things easier, he added.

"One, we're the instructors they've had for the last six-seven months, so they know us and they know how we operate," Sgt Whotton said. "That way they have their expectations, we have our expectations of what we want from them and what they expect from me."

"At the same time, with young recruits, I can ask them to do something and there is no hesitation because they trust me. They believe whatever I say is for their benefit, which is exactly what we need."

Of course, there is always some trepidation when it comes to a new experience like the CPC.

"I think they're nervous because it's the fear of the unknown. They've never been in a situation like this before," Sgt Whotton said. "I've got one recruit who's never seen snow until last week. So for him, the fear of the unknown is what is the hardest at the moment."

While the CPC is a competition, he said it's important to remember who and what they're competing against.

"We're not competing against the other teams, we're competing against ourselves and our own abilities and they're [the other teams] doing the exact same thing, they're giving it their all, we're giving it our all, and at the end of it we're playing the game," he said.

So how did Sgt Whotton think his team would perform? "I think they'll do fantastic," he said at the time. "I think we'll do really well. I don't think we'll have any problems whatsoever."

"As long as we can fight the cold, and keep our heads down and push through, which is what we do anyway, I can't see it being a problem," he added.

While there is definitely an international flavour to the CPC, it is the Canadian Patrol Concentration, and one team on hand was representing the 3PPCLI.

"This is totally new to me," MCpl Mike Pollon said prior to getting out on the course. "I've heard lots about it, so I'm excited to get out there."

Different teams had composed themselves in different ways, and MCpl Pollon's 3PPCLI team opted to bring together a mix of experienced members and junior soldiers, in order to get different perspectives on the exercise and get the most out of it.

"That's what the true experience comes from, putting junior members on these teams," he explained. "If you send the best of the best every year who do this all the time, you're not taking anything new back to pass that knowledge on to those who need it."

As Canadians taking part in an outdoor exercise in wintry weather — Wainwright was hovering around zero degrees Celsius during 3PPCLI's time on the course — MCpl Pollon's team had a bit of an experience advantage over the international teams.

"This is second nature to us," he said.

But he did counter that assertion by acknowledging there are times when Canadian troops do exercises in warmer climates and it's the locals who are in their element.

Even so, he said succeeding at the CPC in winter is about being prepared and staying disciplined.

"It's a matter of taking control of my team and ensuring they're drying their feet, switching their clothes and facing those elements," said MCpl Pollon.

# CFB SHILO

## MANITOBA

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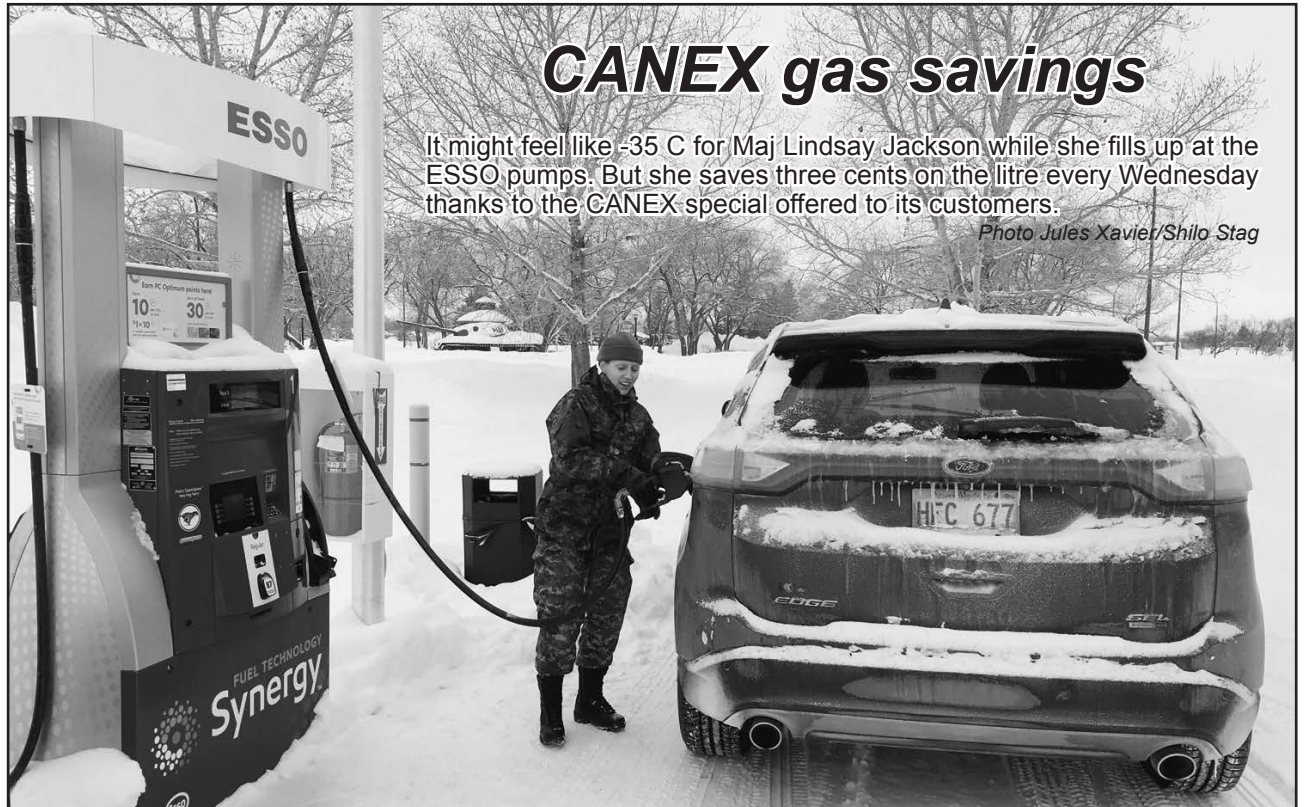
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Photo Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag

**CAF seeks Indigenous members for sports**

**Stag Special**

The office of Military Personnel Generation is looking into the possibility of forming Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Indigenous teams or Indigenous Members to compete in regional, national and possibly international events.

Such events may include participation at the following events:

- <http://arcticwintergames.org/>
- <http://mastersindigenousgames.ca/about/about-the-games/> (adults)
- <https://ascnwt.ca/north-american-indigenous-games> (cutoff age 22)

If you are a CAF Indigenous member on this Base, and are interested in the possibility of representing the CAF at such events, email the following information — to the Base COS' executive assistant Karli Allen at Karli.Allen@forces.gc.ca — SN, rank, name/initials, Base location and sports or events interested in being part of as an athlete.

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# FOCUS ON EX FROZEN GUNNER

Photos Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag

Col Bob Ritchie, 1CMBG Commander, visited 1RCHA in the field during Ex FROZEN GUNNER, where soldiers endured frigid winter conditions while honing their artillery skills.



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