Proceedings - OMMC 2015 Ottawa, 49th Annual Meeting and Museums Studies Course, 15-19 June 2015

 77 OMMC members, other representatives of member institutions, the head of the museum staff of Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH) at National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, and an observer from Army HQ 1 Heritage staff, gathered Sunday, 14 June, 2015, at the Residence of the Woodroffe Campus of Algonquin College, Ottawa, for this annual event. Total attendance was up just a bit from that of 2014, always a good sign.

15 June

Annual Meeting of Members (AMM - new name for the annual general meeting)

 - Governance. The Articles of Continuance and new Bylaws agreed by members in June 2014 to move OMMC governance from the rules of the *Canada Corporations Act, Part II* to the new rules of the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act* were approved by the Director of Corporations, Industry Canada, effective 24 June 2014. No proposals were brought to the AMM for amendment to the 2014 Articles or Bylaws. OMMC policies on membership, education grants, protection of personal information and financial management have been completed, translated and have been posted to the OMMC internet web-site. The policies implement the Articles and Bylaws.

 - Charity Status. OMMC had passed through a complete annual charitable institution cycle with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) without problems of any kind. Issuing of receipts for income tax purposes for membership fees and for other donations in cash or kind, begun in June 2014, continued unchanged. OMMC became a registered charity in Québec, again, in 2014.

 - Membership. Total membership in June 2014 was 135; in June 2015, it stood at 157 - good news.

 - Finances. The audited financial statements for 2014 were accepted by the members. OMMC remained in stable condition financially, although not well off by any means. Restoration in 2014 of registered charity status effective February 2010 enabled retrieval from the CRA of a total of $14,000 in GST/HST rebates for 2010, 2011 and 2012. The GST/HST rebate of $6,000 for 2013 was achieved in the usual manner. $8,000 was received from Revenu Québec in a QST rebate related to purchases in Montreal for OMMC 2012. There was no Department of National Defence (DND) grant to support conduct of course OMMC 2014. OMMC responded in May 2015 to a Request for Proposal issued by DND/DHH for conduct of OMMC 2015. The bid was successful. The contract value was $48,530. Contracting for course conduct, rather than grants, will be the norm in the future. To strengthen OMMC ability to support members’ education through assistance grants, members agreed to increase the target value of the allocated OMMC Education Reserve to $100,000.

 - Auditor. Ms. Sandy Vanier, of the firm of L. Zinman and Company of Ottawa, declined to accept the contract as OMMC public accountant (new term for auditor) for 2015. Members agreed to empower the Board to appoint a new public accountant. Ms. Vanier was the OMMC book-keeper, accountant and auditor, in succession, for 20 years - her support was always clear, accurate and much appreciated by the Executive.

 - Head Office and Administration. The head office of OMMC continued operations at Sidney, BC, without problem. Administrative procedures are kept to the minimum necessary for proper conduct of business as a not-for-profit corporation. The OMMC web site at www.ommcinc.ca continues to grow.

 - Elections of Directors. Stuart Beaton stepped down as a Director and as President of OMMC at the end of the AMM. Stu deserves much credit for yeoman service on the Board since 2003. Andrew Nellestyn became the President and Léon Chamois became Vice President. Jim Whitham, Director of Collections of the Canadian War Museum, was elected as a director. Stephanie Aitchison and Eric Ruel were both elected for a second term as a director. There were no nominations from the floor. OMMC Directors and Officers for 2015-16 are:

 Name Office Term Ends at Close of AGM

 Andrew Nellestyn President 2017

 Léon Chamois Vice President 2016

 David L. Stinson Secretary 2017

 Richard E. Ruggle Treasurer 2016

 Bethany Aitchison Director at Large 2018

 Rory Cory Director at Large 2016

 Greg Gallant Director at Large 2017

 Dale Murray Director at Large 2017

 Eric Ruel Director at Large 2018

 Bruce Tascona Director at Large 2017

 Jim Whitham Director at Large 2018

 - Location for OMMC 2016. The Military Museums will host OMMC 2016 at Calgary in June 2016.

 - Education Grants, 2014. The grants program, a mandated activity in our Articles of Incorporation, is managed by the OMMC Education Committee. Expenditure in 2014 was $2,464. 2014 grant recipients were: Chris Colton (National Air Force Museum); Bethany Aitchison (CAF Museum of Aerospace Defence); Georgiana Stanciu (The RCR Museum); Walter Brooks (The Military Museums, Calgary); and Dennis Puranen and Randy Iwanic (Royal Winnipeg Rifles). Rory Cory, Chair of the Committee, noted that the grants are available to any member of OMMC and that applications for 2015 were lacking!;

 - Non-Director Member, nominations committee, elections of directors, OMMC AMM 2016 - Sandra Johnson Penney.

 - Stuart Beaton presented Jim Whitham with the OMMC membership certificate for the Canadian War Museum, noting that a former Director of the CWM was the founder of OMMC in 1967 and that the CWM had been the Organizations “home” for many years - re-establishing the connection is a truly welcome development;

 - David Stinson drew course members’ attention to the framed Letters Patent for the Grant of Arms to OMMC by the Chancellery of Heraldry in 1999. He warmly thanked Dan MacKay, a former President of OMMC, for his care of the Letters Patent for many years when the Organization had no “home” for this beautiful illustrated document. A suitable resting place for the Letters Patent will be found. [Secretary Note: The Letters Patent document has been donated to the Canadian War Museum.]

DHH Presentations

 The balance of the morning was taken up by the annual museum safety lecture given by Sean Hunter of the DHH 5 staff (it gets better every year), a welcome presentation by Michel Litalien, the DHH Program Manager for Military Museums and Archaeology and a short talk by Rafael Sandoval of DHH 5 staff re the new museum asset management software (The Museum System (TMS)) being procured by DND with implementation beginning before the end of 2015, all going well. Michel’s remarks included the following:

 - The official openings of the largely renovated R22eR Museum at Quebec and the NB Military History Museum were recently completed - both of these facilities are beautiful;

 - 31 Service Battalion Museum at Hamilton has been accredited as a CAF Museum;

 - Museum Development Funding (MDF). All CAF Museums with unspent allocations of museum development funding from past years were encouraged to make good use of the money at their earliest opportunity. CAF Museums interested in an MDF allocation in financial year 2016-17 were encouraged to apply early!;

 - Capital funding of $10M value is being sought for construction of the RCEME Museum at Kingston and replacement of the Logistics Museum at Montreal;

 - The travelling exhibit portraying the CAF operations in Afghanistan has been approved for development - the allocated funding is $800K;

 - The new Defence Administrative Order and Directive (DAOD) on military Museums, replacing CAF Administrative Order 27-5, is in the final stages of production; and

 - The 17 Wing Winnipeg Museum is closed and the assets are available for disposal - members were advised to speak with Gord Crossley for details. The 15 Wing Moose Jaw Museum is also closed - asset disposal details will be advised.

Afternoon and Evening Activity

 The afternoon included gatherings of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and Canadian Army museum groups, always useful sessions for collaboration. The course then moved to the Canadian War Museum. The course was welcomed to the CWM by James Whitham, CWM Director of Collections. Andrew Nellestyn, the new OMMC President, spoke of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) developed in Spring 2015 between OMMC and the CWM with the intent of strengthening the relationship between the CWM and the broader military museum community in Canada, many members of which are part of the OMMC. Jim and Andrew then signed the MOU. It will be posted on the OMMC web site. Major General Derek Joyce, Deputy Commander, Military Personnel Command, CAF, then addressed the gathering. DHH is part of Military Personnel Command. He stated that the annual national military museum development courses are an on-going, critical and valuable component in DND's maintenance and expansion of a viable national military museum community and network.  MGen Joyce further noted that OMMC has been and continues to be instrumental in working closely with DND to deliver excellent courses.  He applauded OMMC efforts to promote Canadian military history and heritage and to work with military museums across Canada to collect, conserve, preserve and exhibit military artifacts as well as serving as a national communications point and clearing house for military museum information.  MGen Joyce particularly cited the strong and enduring relationship between OMMC and DHH; a joint effort which he and the Commander Military Personnel Command actively support.  He congratulated the CWM and OMMC for entering into a MOU to work jointly together to promote Canadian military museology.  He closed his remarks by wishing the OMMC and course attendees every success in their course work, visits and workshops whilst in Ottawa and thanking them for their considerable efforts in promoting Canada's military history and heritage. The course then broke into its five student groups and moved off for a comprehensive tour of the “back-stage” of the CWM - the restoration garage and technical equipment room, the art vault, the arms vault, the dress and insignia workshop and the military history research centre. At the end of the tours, the course re-assembled and moved to the roof of the CWM for a group photograph. The group then returned to Algonquin College. A strong “Well Done” goes to all members of the CWM staff who made the visit memorable.

 After a brief pause to change, find medals, etc, the course moved to Morrison Artillery Park, on the former Uplands site, now the home of 30th Field Regiment RCA and the Bytown Gunners Firepower Museum, an OMMC CAF Museum member, for the annual Meet and Greet function and memorial service. The evening was a rousing success. Special thanks go to Dave Brown, Museum Chair, Melissa Kehoe, and all of the members of the Firepower Museum staff who assisted - it was well done in all respects. The 2015 course photograph is excellent.

16 June

 - This was the first academic day of the course. The academic theme for OMMC 2015 was archives. The lead instructor was Terry Quinlan, Professor of Museology, Algonquin College. Terry engaged experts from various archives in the Ottawa area to present on topics listed in the course specification. The presenter on 16 June in the morning was Paul Henry, Archivist from the City of Ottawa, speaking on “What is an archives; what purposes do archives serve; what is their organization in Canada; what laws and rules govern their operations; and what special conditions of governance which apply to archives. The afternoon presenter was Tanya Anderson, Copyright Officer, Canadian Museum of History, speaking on copyright in the broad sense, the specific rules regarding copyright as they relate to acquisitions and exhibits in museums and copyright vs licensing.

 - The final event of the day was the annual OMMC history quiz, led this year by Léon Chamois, using the usual incredible questions prepared by Don Manley, the long-time quizmaster who was unable to attend this year. Léon ran the quiz with much style and great humour, guaranteeing his selection for the task in future years!

17 June

 - This was a day of seeing the “back-stage” of Library and Archives Canada (LAC) at its preservation centre at Gatineau and a counterpart facility in the restoration hangar of the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum (CASM) at Rockcliffe. The Gatineau facility is huge, with a massive storage area for art, documents and related artifacts and a whole large floor dedicated to the preservation and restoration of all kinds of archival materials. 30 course members (maximum group size) toured this facility in the morning and 30 saw it in the afternoon. The LAC tour organizer was Suzanne Pagé-Dazé - blessings on her for a truly literate tour of an amazing facility. While the morning group was at LAC, the rest of the course was out at CASM for a tour of the main collection and a guided tour of the restoration hanger. CASM was particularly busy that day, but Stephen Quick’s great organization still absorbed all of us on our tours with grace and expertise. While the afternoon group headed for LAC, those course members who could not be included in the LAC tours went off to the Canadian Museum of History to see the special *Magna Carta* exhibit. Special thanks go to Laurent-Claude Laliberté for suggesting viewing the *Magna Carta* (very rarely on tour) and to Jo-Anne Gilliland Power for a cell-phone connection with one of the bus drivers which kept the transportation that day moving generally as intended.

 - The one course evening session included presentations by Dennis Puranen on display lighting and the value of courses offered by the Canadian Conservation Institute, by Chris Colton on the results of a study conducted at the National Air Force Museum, Trenton, on how to best raise the attractiveness of the institution to get more people in the door and a discussion led by Gord Crossley on closure of the 17 Wing Winnipeg Museum.

18 June

 This was the second day of the academic program. The morning presenter was John Lund from the City of Ottawa Archives on the topic of digital production of archival materials - the specifications, the equipment and the costs - digital archives preservation, additional support services and where to find them, and training opportunities.

The afternoon archival presenter was Sylvia Kindl, again from the City of Ottawa Archives, speaking on storage of archival materials, unique preservation concerns, archival storage solutions, additional support services and how to access them and training opportunities. The last presenter of the day was Cynthia Jones, an OMMC member from the Museum and Archives of the Royal Highland Regiment (the Black Watch) of Canada, Montreal, speaking about the progress of development and maintenance of the archives of a storied Reserve unit in an historic armoury - there are challenges, indeed, in such places.

 - The course members who attended LAC tours on 17 June all had their turn in the evening of 18 June to visit the Canadian Museum of History and, hopefully, to view the *Magna Carta*. Thanks and praise go to the staff of Bistro Boréal at the Museum for feeding an unusually large number of guests very well on very short notice - it was a bravura performance.

19 June

 This was the day in the course for historical education, visits to member Museums and the course closing.

By bus to Cornwall in the morning in beautiful weather, to the Cornwall Armoury, home of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders of Canada reserve infantry unit and the SDG Highlanders Museum. The hosts were Léon Chamois, Curator of the Museum, and Isabel Chamois, display coordinator. After touring the museum, course members were treated to an excellent lunch in the Mess area of the Armoury, itself a historic building. Lunch was followed by a lecture by Donald Graves, a military historian of much experience, on the importance of the Battle of Crysler’s Farm, which took place west of Cornwall in 1813. The Battles of Crysler’s Farm and Chateauguay, both in the upper St Lawrence region in 1813, stopped cold an American army advancing on Montreal in an attempt to seize that city and begin the capture of Canada. Mr. Graves, author of the books *Field of Glory* (Crysler’s Farm) and *Where Right and Glory Lead* (Battle of Lundy’s Lane, 1814)( both published by Robin Brass Studio, Toronto)

gave a clear presentation on the criticality of the fight. The course then moved off to the Battlefield Memorial at Morrisburg where Mr. Graves, using the excellent diorama facility in the Memorial, demonstrated how the battle unfolded over 9-10 November 1813. He received warm applause for his presentations. The course then returned to Algonquin College at Ottawa. Lesson learned - no school buses for our longer trips!

 In the evening, the course moved to the Cartier Square Drill Hall on the Rideau Canal in downtown Ottawa. The presentations were opened by LCol (Ret’d) Dan MacKay, former President of OMMC and former Commanding Officer of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa, who spoke on the historic significance of the Drill Hall, now a heritage building but still a very active armoury. Course members then had the opportunity to tour the museums of the Cameron Highlanders and the Governor General’s Foot Guards(GGFG) and to visit the Officers Mess of the GGFG, the place where Sir Sam Hughes, then Minister of Militia, publically announced in 1914 that Canada was at war with Germany.

 The final event of the day was the traditional formal dinner to close the course. It was held in the Rideau Junior Ranks Mess at Cartier Square and was a most pleasant occasion. Life Membership certificates were presented to Donald Carrington, a former Vice President, President and Executive Director of OMMC, to Keith Inches, an OMMC member of more than 30 years standing and a former OMMC Treasurer, and to Stuart Beaton, OMMC Vice President for many years and President from April 2013, now stepping down from the Executive.

In his closing remarks, President Andrew Nellestyn stated that the members attending had once again been well served by those who organized and presented the course and that a high standard had, indeed, been set for The Military Museums of Calgary, the host for OMMC 2016.

Closing

The Directors wish to publically thank Terry Quinlan, Hollie Colville, Lisa Barker and Jennifer Thurston-Saunders of Algonquin College - the support given in academics, accommodation, facilities and food service was all that we asked for and more - we would come back again. Many thanks also go Jim Whitham and the staff of the Canadian War Museum, to Suzanne Pagé-Dazé and all of her colleagues at Library and Archives Canada, to Stephen Quick and the staff of the Canadian Aviation and Space Museum and to the generosity of the staff of the Canadian Museum of History toward their OMMC colleagues, Course Director’s special thanks go to Andrew Nellestyn and Melissa Kehoe for being organizers “on the ground” in Ottawa (some things are difficult to do across three time zones) and to Estelle and Marty Lane for making the course reception at Algonquin College go so smoothly.

On to Calgary!