



# THE GUARDS STAR

**Editor:** Cpl Jeff Kingsbury, [guardsstareditor@gmail.com](mailto:guardsstareditor@gmail.com) ♦ Deadline for submissions for the next edition is Nov. 15th, 2021 ♦ Send all submissions and email additions/corrections to the Editor.

**- September 2021 -**

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**From the GGFGRA President**  
MWO Stephane Marleau, CD (Ret'd)

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Another summer is starting to wind down and while things are relatively quiet on the Association front, activities related to the 150th anniversary are starting to ramp up. I would encourage all of you to get involved in any or all of our 150th activities. Many events will require volunteers and your participation will be most welcome. We would normally be discussing the annual reunion dinner for this fall but once again, the uncertainty of COVID and a 4th wave makes planning a challenge. It is quite likely that that this will be postponed yet again. However, this will make the activities planned for next year's 150th homecoming events even more anticipated and welcome. We have something to look forward too.

I have been in contact with some of our deployed personnel in the Ukraine. Those that are currently there report being extremely busy but they are performing well and always living up to the Guards' standard.

The Regiment will be starting to return in the fall and begin what is expected to be a busy training year and we wish them good luck!

Up the Guards!



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**Message from the Lieutenant-Colonel  
Commanding**

LCol Vincent Quesnel, CD, AdeC

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Fellow Guards and members of the Regimental Family,

I hope that you have had the opportunity to enjoy the warm summer weather and trust that you are eager for a return to the normal activities that come in the Fall period. I wish to welcome back all those who attended

summer training - congratulations on your success. In particular, I would like to say how proud I am of all our members who successfully completed leadership courses; your success is vital to the growth of the unit. Well done!

This summer has been unique for the Regiment, as with limited availability of summer training and no summer public duties season, on the whole, we have had a relatively relaxed summer period. However, the beginning of the summer did see us rapidly spinning up a BMQ course. Under the supervision of the PD Company, it was completed successfully, respecting all health measures that were in place. Then, as the ambitious summer training plan of the Division was scaled back, leadership courses were made the priority. Consequently, many other courses were cancelled, which provided a well-deserved break to some of our core staff and has allowed us to get started on planning for the Fall.

On the ceremonial side, the only official summer activity was the National Sentry Program, which has been very well supported by Public Duties Company. We also took on the task of supporting the National Military Cemetery at Beechwood where a small team of Guards has been extremely busy as interments that were put on hold due to the pandemic restarted as restrictions lifted. I, and many members of the unit, were able to attend the interments of two of our own: Sgt Art McKenzie Sr and LCol Scott Sturgess. To the families, we offer our most sincere condolences for your loss. We will miss them both very much.

With the installation of our new Governor General, Her Excellency Mary Simon, we were able to stretch our ceremonial legs again. My thanks go out to Sgt Witol and the troops of the quarter guard, including a few Grenadiers from Montreal, who did an excellent job and pulled the tasking together on very short notice.

This Fall brings some exciting new engagements for the Regiment as we line up our activities with 1 RCR. This will provide some of our members the opportunity to participate in two of their exercises and operate in a Mechanized Infantry role. A big thanks goes

to Maj Nick Fysh, on our side, and the CO of 1 RCR LCol John Summerfield, for making this possible. We have also programmed an active agenda, with force health protection measures in place. The expectation is to undertake normal activities during the Fall training period, beginning with in clearance, which runs from the start of September through to the 11th; for serving members, check your email for details.

Finally, the planning for the 150th continues to move ahead, and we have already achieved great success in securing support from the City and a variety of other organizations as we line up activities aimed at celebrating our anniversary. There is still yet much to do, and we are looking for support in certain key areas. If you have an interest or skills in communications, social media, history and leading projects please identify yourself to the planning committee to lend your support.

I look forward to seeing you all over the course of the Fall. Up the Guards!



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### Message from the Regimental Sergeant Major CWO Greg Witol, CD

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Fellow Guardsmen,

This is my first article for the Guards Star since taking over as Sergeant Major. I must extend my sincere thanks to Chief Warrant Officer Doucette. Keeping things afloat and pushing our Regimental goals forward is hard enough in normal times. Doing all this in the face of lockdowns, distancing and constantly changing direction has made this even harder, and CWO Doucette rose to that challenge. It was an honour to serve as his Drill Sergeant.

While we are not through this pandemic insanity yet, there does seem to be an end in sight. Though we do not yet have a full description of exactly how we will return to in-person training, we should expect to be back together for in-clearance. We recently had our first ceremonial event, with an Arrival Guard at Rideau Hall following the installation of our new Governor General.

Post-COVID rebuilding will come with an entirely new set of challenges. With recruiting slowly returning, we need to re-commence our growth, but while this happens, the Foot Guards will still need to meet our tasks and obligations. That means even more demand for each of us to stand up and contribute when needed.

We have also seen more and more soldiers embracing the responsibility of leadership and coming forward for their courses. Not only must this continue, but we need even more of you to step up. We are still understaffed at every rank level in the Regiment, and there are going to be even more demands for instructors

and leaders as the entire Canadian Armed Forces looks to re-build post pandemic.

I know this is a lot to ask, and I know it only gets harder as we progress. Family, day jobs, and leadership responsibilities all require our attention. And after more than three decades in the Reserves, I can say there is no magic formula. We have to dig deep, and find a way to make it work. But that does not mean we should not develop more effective ways of doing our job. As we emerge from the pandemic, let us hold on to some things we've developed during this time that have improved things, like our ability to share information.

And, let us all understand that change is coming. We can't ignore the clear direction for cultural change across the Armed Forces. We've seen some of the CAF's most senior leadership step aside due to misconduct, and that reckoning isn't over yet. But I think a big part of that culture change will require that we embrace the characteristics that, as Guards, we all aim for:

- Duty before self.
- Personal discipline.
- Self-control in all environments.

For nearly a century and a half, these attributes have helped the Guards succeed, from the parade square to the battlefield. They are not a sign of a broken culture, but rather the goals we strive to achieve.

As we prepare for our 150th anniversary next year, let us all stand up as needed, embrace our duty, and make this Regiment stronger than ever.

Up the Guards!



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**From the Executive Director,  
150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Organizing Committee**  
LCol Fran Chilton-Mackay, OMM, MSM, CD (Ret'd)

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The Organizing Committee continues to move the yardstick forward in our planning for 2022. As noted in the last Guards Star there will be two main periods of

activity. The first period from Saturday, June 4 – Tuesday June 7, 2022 will include the Freedom of the City Parade and Re-dedication of the 7th Stand of Colours at City Hall with Reception following at the Drill Hall; the Sr NCOS/Officers' Birthday Dinner at the Ottawa Hunt Club; and the Birthday 150th Smoker at the Drill Hall. The second period will be the Reunion Weekend taking place between Friday, September 23rd – Sunday, September 25th, 2022. It will feature Open Houses/Receptions at the Drill Hall (Friday and Saturday), hopefully a Parade at Rideau Hall on Saturday, the Gala Dinner at the Chateau Laurier on Saturday evening and a Church Service at St. Bartholomew's on Sunday. A link will be provided from the 150th website ([www.ggfg150.ca](http://www.ggfg150.ca)) to book rooms for both weekends at the Lord Elgin and Chateau Laurier Hotels.

Another exciting event is our partnering with the Ottawa Hunt Club and the LPGA Women's Open taking place at the Ottawa Hunt Club from Aug 22 - 28, 2022. The first President and Founding Father of the Hunt Club was our own LCol James Woods, Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding of the Regiment from 1910 - 1917. His portrait proudly hangs inside the Club House and as such we share a unique relationship with the Club. We have been asked to assist with the trophy ceremony and tending the 18th Green Flag on the final round of play. We have also been given the opportunity to "Adopt-a-Hole" for the duration of the tournament. This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the Regiment, our 150th and build comradery as we celebrate our Anniversary next year. In order to secure this opportunity we require 20-30 Association members to volunteer their time. We will also be reaching out to the Cadet Corps. Volunteers are required to work at least 24 hours over a minimum of 4 days during the championship. This will give you the experience of being inside the ropes at a professional sporting event and witnessing the world's greatest women golfers. It will also give significant recognition to the Regiment.

Volunteers are each required to pay an \$80 volunteer fee, but this includes a number of benefits, including:

- Official shirt and headwear
- Badge with access to the course as volunteer or spectator
- Transferable weekly guest pass
- Weekly parking pass
- Volunteer bag
- Discounted concession pricing

You can visit the website for more information at <http://www.cpwomensopen.com>. We are also looking for someone to be the coordinator for the group. If you are interested in participating in this unique opportunity please email the Executive Director, LCol Fran Chilton-Mackay (Ret'd) directly at [mackay3468@rogers.com](mailto:mackay3468@rogers.com). Before we move forward we need to ensure we will get enough volunteers. Once this is determined we will give you instructions for you to register on line. The "Adopt-

a-Hole" programme is filling up quickly and this opportunity will only be available for a limited time. If you have not already stated your intention to participate from previous notices please do so ASAP so we can secure our hole.

This fall we will start to populate the website with merchandise that can be purchased through CANEX and the ability to register for the events that are being planned. At the present time magnets, stickers, lapel pins, coffee mugs and T-Shirts are in the works. Also looking at ball caps, travel mugs, rugby shirts and whisky glasses. Don't forget you can presently order the Guards 150th 5- and 10-year Whisky on either the 150th or Association websites.

Progress on the 150th Coffee Table book has been slow, mostly due to a lack of submissions from our members. Please refer to the website and send your submissions to [ggfg150th@gmail.com](mailto:ggfg150th@gmail.com). We are also still looking for volunteers to assist with this project. Many hands make lighter work. Please help us to achieve our goals for the 150th by dedicating some time. If anyone has any graphic artist skills we are also looking for a volunteer in this capacity as well.

Lastly, the donation portal on the 150th website is operational, and we are seeking your support to raise funds for both the Charitable and Celebratory campaigns. A Regimental Family Individual Donation goal of \$20,000 has been set. We have received some very generous donations from Association Members so far but have a way to go to reach our goal. Please consider making a monthly contribution from now until December 2022. What about a friendly rivalry between the companies, the band, the Association or alumni groups to see who can raise the most? Official tax receipts are automatically emailed to you once your donation has been made.

I will be continuing to update you throughout the year as we all look forward to marking this important milestone in the history of our Regiment. Mark your calendars! See you in '22!



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**No. 1 Company Adapts to Training in a Pandemic**  
Maj Nicholas Fysh, CD  
Officer Commanding, 1 Company

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The pandemic has made the last year difficult for everyone and the impact on reserve infantry training was no exception. No. 1 Coy made the best of things in order to conduct the best and most engaging training we were able to in the circumstances. Without having the opportunity to conduct any field exercises, and restricted much of the time to virtual training over MS Teams we were limited in what we were able to do. This

fall, with rising vaccination rates things are looking positive to get back to conducting good, hard, infantry training in person. That being said, we will remain vigilant and continue to observe layered health protection measures.

A number of members of the rifle company distinguished themselves this summer on courses:

MCpls Afkham-Ebrahimi, and Correoso completed Rifle Section Commander Course. MCpl Correoso was the runner up to the top candidate on his course. Cpls Blaney, Porter, Amini, Beechinor, Cheff, and Farnand completed the Infantry Section Commander's Course (ISCC). Cpl Blaney in particular distinguished herself and was named top candidate on her course. Esgn Kopp successfully completed Basic Military Officer Qualification Army (BMOQ-A) in Edmonton. OCdt Saba completed the year long infantry internship in Gagetown and returns to the regiment as a fully qualified infantry platoon commander in both the light and mechanized roles.

The number of personnel performing on leadership courses speaks to the quality of the leadership development training run by CSgt Kowlessar which was able to be proven extremely effective even in a restricted pandemic training environment.

Members of the company were also employed on a range of tasks as part of full time summer employment (FTSE), ranging from instructors on courses; the National Sentry Program and National Military Cemetery; bolstering the staff in the orderly room, quartermaster, and as PD company; and supporting SJS on strategically important tasks.

We have a busy fall program and are looking forward to getting back to training in person (hopefully without disruptions). We will begin the training year with our standard qualification ranges in September where members will fire C7, C9, and C6. We will also use this opportunity to brush up on field craft, navigation, and hide routine.

Following our qualification ranges we will be moving into a focus on defensive operations, conducting defensive field exercises in October and November. Members of the Company will get re-acquainted with defensive skillset such as digging trenches, building obstacles, siting support weapons, manning observation posts, and of course patrolling. Throughout the year we will be conducting exercises jointly with the Algonquin Regiment and 2nd Battalion, The Irish Regiment of Canada as part of the North Star Company Group.

Another exciting opportunity for No. 1 Coy soldiers this year will be reserve integration training opportunities being run by our affiliated regular force unit, 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment (1 RCR). Throughout the fall they will be running a number of activities such a mechanized infantry familiarisation training for reservists in September, as well as inviting us

to participate in their exercises and military skills competitions through October and November. This should be an excellent opportunity for members of the regiment to work with and learn from the soldiers of 1 RCR and gain experience in mechanized infantry skillsets.

Lastly (but also most importantly) we will once again be prioritizing our Leadership Development Program (LDTP) in order to develop the next cohort of junior leaders for the regiment. Members of the LDTP will be mentored on all of the skillsets they need to be successful on the ISCC or BMOQ-A, including leadership skills, battle procedure and tactical planning, delivering orders, navigation, patrolling.

All in all, this fall is looking like it will be an excellent return to training for the rifle company.

Up the Guards!



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### Exploring the Band's 150th Projects

Sgt Malcolm Odell, CD

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In celebration of the regiment's 150th anniversary, the band is planning several projects to promote the unit and its history happening around the National Capital Region! Check them out:

Pop-up events: Keep your eyes out when you're out and about in Ottawa for some GGFG flash mob fun! The band is hoping to recruit a few Guards to help put on some spontaneous performances around Ottawa with small groups.

March competition: This year, the band hopes to host a march competition. Musicians from the whole world will be welcome to compose and submit an original march that is based on GGFG's history! The top marches will be selected to be recorded by the GGFG band. Once recorded, people will be allowed to vote online to narrow it down to the final round. In the final round, the marches will be performed live, and a panel of judges will select winners! Make sure you follow the Governor General's Footguards Facebook page to be notified when the competition is underway.

School workshops: Educational outreach is something the band hopes to do more and more of, and in line with that, we plan to stage some school workshops this year. For these workshops, members of the band will go into schools with music programs and run workshops on things like parading, musical skills, and more! Most schools in the NCR don't feature marching, so this will give students a chance to try pounding the pavement.

Solo competition: Another project to look out for is the GGFG Band Solo Competition. Musicians within a 500km radius of the NCR will be invited to

audition and be judged so that winners from woodwind, brass, and percussion sections are selected. The winners of each category would receive a cash prize, as well as the opportunity to perform as a soloist with the band!

Reserve band showcase: By far our biggest project, the reserve band showcase, will bring together CAF reserve bands from across the country for a weekend of workshops, rehearsals, and networking, culminating in a concert. It's sure to be big, so keep your eyes peeled!

In addition to these events the band will kick the training year off with the Band Exercise 2021. After three years of successful band exercises, the band is hoping to stage another one this year. The band exercise is an opportunity for GGFG musicians to develop their musical, drill, A/V, and soft skills over a weekend, culminating in a performance. This year, the band hopes to put this exercise on at RMC Kingston in order to work with the RMC band conductor.




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**Ross House**  
Col Rob M. Foster, MSM, CD

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As a young subaltern officer in the Regiment back in the early 1990s there was often late night talk in the "Snake Pit" about the idea of a "Ross House" a sort of Fraternity house for subaltern officers attending University. The late Captain Stephen Pallas used to push this idea and since he was in the property management business with another Guards alumni, Brent Cheff, it seemed a plausible concept. In fact in 1991 four young officers did set up in an Apartment, which was akin to the idea of a Ross House. The apartment was well defined but had a few deficiencies. I personally stayed for a week and moved out due to the flawed electrical in the room that I would occupy. My brothers-in-arms enjoyed the residence for several years. Imagine my dismay, years later, I found out that the actual Ross House exists!



The area known as Sandy Hill in Ottawa is designated with a series of historical zones as a result of the large number of heritage houses in the neighbourhood<sup>1</sup>. Several years ago I walked through the area in order to imagine the people that lived in the area and what the street would have looked like a hundred years ago. Looking at one of the houses in the late 1990s I noted the dilapidated condition, the incongruent additions and the heritage plaque of one house in particular. Regardless of the condition, the house was an

important discovery as it turned out to be the home of the first Commanding Officer, of the Governor General's Foot Guards. A visit down Stewart Street revealed the house has been revitalised and in excellent condition, although it is divided into a number of apartments. The plaque on the house makes mention of Thomas Ross but provides no detail as to who he was, or his accomplishments, in the early years of the new Capital. The house provides a small insight into this important Canadian, but few know his story.



The Census of 1871<sup>2</sup> listed him living in the residence at 188 Stewart Street; 50 years old in the employment of the Civil Service with a wife, Ellen, 35 years old and a daughter, Annie, 23 years old. All are listed as members of the Church of England. Thomas and Annie are of Scottish descent and Ellen is of English descent. Further research determines that his first wife passed away in 1860 and that Annie is his only child from that marriage<sup>3</sup>. The 1881 Census shows him as resident at 188 Stewart with his wife Ellen and two female servants. The daughter Annie had married and moved out producing his only grandchild; Maud Clayton who appears in the 1891 census as a 17 year old single female<sup>4</sup>. Thomas Ross lived at 188 Stewart Street until his death on the 10th of August 1901. His wife, Ellen continued to live at the residence until her death in 1910<sup>5</sup>.



Thomas Ross joined the Civil Service at an early age in Lower Canada serving under Sir Dominic Daly. He rose through the bureaucracy to become the Chief Clerk and Accountant of the Contingencies in the Provincial Secretary's office for 28 years.<sup>6</sup> In 1868, he moved to Ottawa where he was briefly employed with the Department of State before he transferred to the Finance Department. During his tenure with the Finance Department he was responsible for the formation of the



Stationary office which turned out to be a lucrative financial success. By 1885, he was the highest paid civil servant with an annual salary of 2,600 dollars seconded only to his immediate supervisor, John Mortimer Countancy, the Deputy Minister of Finance. He retired on the 8th of July 1886 on his sixty-fifth birthday.<sup>7</sup>

9 - Foster, R.M., pg 12.  
10 - Foster, R.M., pg 25.

Like most men of that era, Ross was part of the militia. He had served during the Fenian Raids and on transfer to Ottawa was first part of the Civil Service Rifles and later a member of the Ottawa Brigade of Garrison Artillery.<sup>8</sup> A fervent monarchist, Ross was determined to raise a special battalion that "...would be at the disposal of the Government on all occasions of State, or otherwise as the case may be."<sup>9</sup> Ross primarily as a result of his influence as a senior civil servant was able to fulfil his desire and commanded the first battalion of the Governor General's Foot Guards which were stylised after the Queen's Household Troops in England. Ross was instrumental in commissioning Thomas Seaton Scott, Chief Architect for the Department of Public Works to design an Armoury and in 1879 Cartier Square Drill Hall was completed as the permanent home of the Regiment.<sup>10</sup>



The story of 188 Stewart Street deserves to be embellished as one considers the important life that lived in those walls. A man who shaped the early years of the Government of Canada but also helped create one of the most famous military Regiments in Canadian history.



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#### Footnotes

1 - City of Ottawa Website, Sandy Hill Heritage Study, accessed 17 March 2012, [http://ottawa.ca/en/city\\_hall/planningprojectsreports/public\\_consult/sandy\\_hill\\_heritage/index.html](http://ottawa.ca/en/city_hall/planningprojectsreports/public_consult/sandy_hill_heritage/index.html)

2 - Library and Archives Canada, RG31, microfilm C-10014, accessed 18 March 2012, [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/1871-ontario/001016-119.01-e.php?sisn\\_id\\_nbr=347070](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/1871-ontario/001016-119.01-e.php?sisn_id_nbr=347070)

3 - Foster, R.M., Steady the Buttons Two By Two: Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards, Beauregard Printers, Ottawa, 1998, pg 12.

4 - Library and Archives Canada, RG31, microfilm C-10014, accessed 18 March 2012, [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-1891/001081-119.02-e.php?person\\_id\\_nbr=2307004&page\\_sequence\\_nbr=1&interval=&PH\\_PSESSID=samp665p3ku3cclhc9jessl3](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-1891/001081-119.02-e.php?person_id_nbr=2307004&page_sequence_nbr=1&interval=&PH_PSESSID=samp665p3ku3cclhc9jessl3)

5 - Foster, R.M., pg 13.

6 - Foster, R.M., pg 12.

7 - Levesque, A.M., Biographical Sketch Thomas Ross, unpublished, pg 2.

8 - Foster, R.M., pg 13.