

UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE OF NANAIMO AND NORTH ISLAND

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Vol 28 No 03

March 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello All. Well, suffice to say that with all the signs of spring and summer that have been pooping up lately, I am excited that the cooler weather is more than likely behind us, and we have warmer days to look forward to very soon. As I am sure you are aware, our AGM will held this month. Needless to remind all of the importance in attending. The future of this Institute, its stated mission, and the comradery that it supports depends significantly on your participation in this meeting. A reminder to all that this month's Luncheon/ Meeting will be held at 808

(Thunderbird) Wing, RCAFA, 709 Nanaimo Lakes Road on March 11th at the (usual time) 11:30 PM. I have attached a small map of the Wing's location on page 2 of this newsletter to make finding its location easier. Next month, April we are pleased to present our very own LCol (Retd) Ivan Poitras as our Guest speaker. For May, we will be bringing back a warmly appreciated previous (last year) Guest speaker, Dr Boutilier. Hope to see you all at our Annual General Meeting Luncheon.
Edwin



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE OF NANAIMO (NORTH ISLAND)

The Annual General Meeting of this Institute will be held at **808 Wing RCAFA, 709 Nanaimo Lakes Road, on Wednesday, March 11th, 2020**, immediately following lunch. We ex-

pect business will be completed in about one hour's time. A summary of business to be conducted is as follows:

AGM Continued from page 1

1. Approve the Minutes of the AGM held on March 13, 2019.
2. Receive the Report of the Financial Reviewer for 2019.
3. Receive, Review and Approve the Treasurer's Financial Statements of the Institute for 2019.
4. Receive and Consider the Budget recommended by the Board for 2020.
5. Receive the Annual Report of the Outgoing President and such other Reports as may be Appropriate (most directors' reports are included in the President's Report).
6. Receive the Report of the Chair of the Nominations Committee.
7. Conduct Elections.
8. Remarks by the Incoming President.
9. The Members are asked to nominate an Eligible Member to serve as the Members' Financial Reviewer for 2020.
10. New or Other Business by the Members

Members are reminded that any amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws or other **significant business** must have been the subject of a Prior Notice of Motion filed with the Secretary. There were none.

For further information, please contact our Secretary, Bill McCullough at 250-756-0223

A Personal Military Musing

The shortest distance and briefest travel time between two fairly distant points is frequently best covered by aircraft. In the Middle East though, it's neither the safest nor most reliable means of transport.

Recent events in the sky over Tehran recalled something on which I was briefed while preparing for my assignment as Military Attaché to Lebanon, Syria and Jordan in 1982. I was instructed that, while flight clearances for CF aircraft were dealt with more conventionally, an urgent clearance request could be channeled through me and would become an absolutely priority task for me if it did. Well, at an Ottawa briefing months before my scheduled departure, this seemed straightforward to me, so we checked it off the "covered-list" and simply moved along to other subjects.

However, launched off six weeks early and arriving in Beirut smack in the middle of an incoherent multi-sided Lebanese civil war; concurrent invasion by Israel; inter-state fighting between the Syrians & the Israelis; and, with the Palestinians & assorted gunmen wildly shooting at anyone/

Continued on page 3

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This month's Luncheon/Meeting will be held at
808 Wing RCAFA
709 Nanaimo Lakes Road
Nanaimo, BC



Military Musing continued from page 2

everyone in sight, it looked like responding to a request to secure flight clearance would be a whole lot more than just a significant challenge. With no reliable communications, face-to-face contact would be necessary. I knew I could always try the Brits or the Americans, but I would never be sure with what certainty or priority I would get help from them. Everyone was in their own crisis mode, without handling someone else's chestnuts.

So, my wet weather response would have to initially have been to the effect: "No! Do Not Fly-In Until I Confirm Clearance. Wait Out!" Then, depending on the security situation, I would have to drive to either the Lebanese Military HQ at Yarzee, or, the Syrian Intelligence HQ in Damascus. Yarzee on a rare quiet day was a 45-minute drive for me. But, Damascus, although only two to three hours by road, could take two or more days when one had to negotiate a way through numerous check points, all maintained at the point of guns toted by shaky unpredictable gunmen. A "quickie clearance" simply wouldn't have been in the cards.

Fortunately, that call for clearance never came, because, even if you get clearance, in the Middle East, folk tend to shoot first and check bona fides afterwards. All this, part of Beirut Rules.



The preceding Personal Musing is that of Colonel (Retd) W.J. (Bill) McCullough, MSC, CD, a Past President of this Institute and the retiring Chair of our Military & Security Committee.

The following is an open-source report of an earlier clearance that went woefully wrong.

The Fate of United Nations Flight 51

On August 9, 1974, UN Flight 51 was crewed by Captain George Gary Foster (Pilot), Captain Keith Mirau (First Officer), Captain Robert Wicks (Navigator), Master Corporal Ronald Spencer (Flight Engineer), and Corporal Bruce Stringer (Loadmaster). Also on board were four passengers: MWO Gaston Landry, MWO Cyril Korejwo, Corporal Michael Simpson, and Corporal Morris Kennington.

The flight from Beirut to Ismailia proceeded normally. After taking off from Ismailia, passage through Lebanon was also normal and at 0945GMT, UN Flight 51 first contacted Damascus air traffic control center (ATCC). Five minutes later, after receiving clearance to Damascus VOR, the last recorded transmission from Flight 51 to Damascus ATCC reportedly by Captain Mirau, was heard "Roger we are cleared to Damascus VOR to maintain 8000 cross Mike Echo Zulu at 10000 or above."

As the Buffalo crossed into Syria at 11000' ASL (about 6000' above ground level), a surface to air missile was fired at the Buffalo from a Syrian airfield located 14 miles from the Lebanese border. Shortly after, the Buffalo was seen in a controlled descent smoking from the tail. A couple of minutes after the first missile attack, when the Buffalo was 8 miles into Syrian airspace and less than 1000' above ground level, two more missiles were fired at the Buffalo. The first appeared to strike the left wing causing it to burn and the descent to increase. Just above the ground, the last missile hit the cabin area and destroyed the aircraft, scattering wreckage near the town of Ad Dimas in Syria, and killing all nine passengers and crew on board.

The bodies of the nine Canadians were eventually recovered and ever so quietly returned to Canada for equally quiet burials.....*at the going down of the sun... We will Remember Them.*

This month's Luncheon/Meeting will be held at

808 WING RCAFA

709 NANAIMO LAKES ROAD, NANAIMO, BC

on

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11th, 2020

1130 HOURS

\$25.00 per member/person. Guests welcome.

LUNCHEON MEETING ATTENDANCE

Your telephone contact coordinator will attempt to contact you in the days prior to our monthly luncheon/meeting in order to confirm your attendance. In this manner we can provide attendance numbers to the volunteer kitchen staff at RCL 257 so that they may prepare adequately for our function.

If for some reason she has missed you, please contact her or Edwin at 250-751-2360 or ejpeeters@shaw.ca.

A thru E

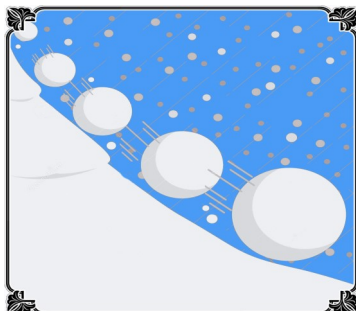
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N thru Z

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USINNI SNOWBALL

Unfortunately one of our Members missed winning the Snowball because they were not in attendance at last month's Luncheon/Meeting. Therefore as per usual in these circumstances the jackpot has been carried over to this month.

Remember you can't win if you do not sign in, and you can't sign in if you don't attend the luncheon/meeting.