

# 39 COMBAT ENGINEER REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION



## EXERCISE PALADIN RESPONSE 2018 - A YEAR OF FIRSTS

Article by: 2Lt Singh Barber, 39 CER/54 ES

39 Combat Engineer Regiment (39 CER) hosted Exercise PALADIN RESPONSE (Ex PR) in Chilliwack, BC from 26 to 31 December 2018. This Exercise has a 30-year history of training Army Reserve Combat Engineers, called Sappers, in mobility operations, specifically bridging. This year, engineer operational planning was added to the exercise in order to train our mid-level leaders for support to Domestic Operations.

The importance of the Primary Reserve force having a bridging capability has been highlighted in recent years with reserve combat engineers constructing an Acrow bridge during the 2017 floods in Laval, Quebec to re-establish access to a cutoff community. Flooded regions of British Columbia during the spring of 2018 did not require bridging, but as our weather patterns change these combat engineers are preparing for this possibility, they are exercising “the skills we need to help Canadians in times of need” says ex OIC Maj Nils French. This included the first complete build of 39 CER’s Acrow bridge. Six bays of single story, double wide Acrow with ramps was continuously built over the five-day exercise, with each troop adding to the previous days’ construction, confirming this capability is ready to deploy if required.

The climate and terrain in Chilliwack make it the perfect location for a bridging exercise, the Army’s floating bridge, a Medium Raft (MR), can be constructed on Cultus lake even in December as this lake rarely freezes. Army Reserve engineers rarely get the opportunity to work on this equipment, Ex PR allows for the maintenance of these skills with hands on training.

New to the exercise, was the addition of an Advanced Training Troop, which challenged mid-level leaders to work through their operational planning process. They were provided with a realistic scenario of the Province of BC requesting assistance to evacuate a small community that had been cut off during flooding. Working through the problem this troop conducted reconnaissance and developed plans in order to provide appropriate mobility support to the community.

The culminating activity on Ex PR is a Medium Girder Bridge (MGB) speed construction competition. Teams of ten sappers compete to build a five panel single story bridge, a bridge capable of spanning 10m for vehicle and pedestrian mobility. They demonstrate their construction skills, strength and agility while building comradery by competing with Sappers from across the country.

Ex PR 2018 was the largest exercise yet in the EX PR series, with over 300 soldiers participating, representing every Reserve CER in Canada. “We now know what our capacity is and we also know that when we have this many reserve force members willingly attend an exercise run during the holiday season, that we have the right kind of people ready and willing to serve Canada domestically, or on operations around the world.” said LCol Jim Julien, CO 39 CER.



Ex Paladin Response 2018 participants gather in front of the completed ACROW bridge for a photo to commemorate the milestone. Photo by: 2 Lt Singh Barber 39 CER/54 ES

## MCPL HARTMAN DONATES TO WIGS4KIDS



For those of you that did not attend EX PALADIN RESPONSE, as promised MCpl Hartman shaved her head and donated her hair and the money raised (\$353.00) during the EX directly to BC Children's Hospital Research Facility to give to Wigs4Kids. Here is the link if anyone else would like to donate. <https://secure.bcchf.ca/WigsForKids?94175>

## 6 FES MUSEUM EXPLAINS A VETERAN'S WW2 EXPERIENCES

On Thursday, January 17 the museum held what we hope is the first of many outreach events. Through the efforts of the Honorary Colonel, we became aware of a WW2 sapper officer's family who wanted to know more about what their father, grandfather and great grandfather did during his service with 16 Field Company RCE during WW2. Both 6 Field Company and 16 Field Company were part of 3 Division and thus would have many experiences in common. Fifteen members of the Lt Weymark family visited the unit at 6 PM. Vince Larocque and Jerry Silva prepared and presented a slide presentation and talk on what Lt Weymark would have experienced during his WW2 service. The 40 minute presentation was followed with a visit to the museum where Vince's bridging dioramas and other memorabilia brought home Lt Weymark's experiences. Discussions and questions continued until almost 9 PM. The presentation was very much appreciated by family members who also were completely unaware of our unit's existence.



Jerry Silva will be participating in another outreach initiative on February 5. The unit will be hosting city council and senior staff and brief them on the armoury and the unit. The museum will be assisting the OC in preparing his presentation.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY BURNS SUPPER

On the 02 February 2019, the J.P. Fell Pipe Band held the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Burns Supper at the Lt Col JP Fell Armoury , home of 6 Engineer Squadron, in North Vancouver.

The “Burns Supper” commemorates the birth of the poet Robert Burns on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1759. The Pipe Band, along with celebrating the life of Robbie Burns also raises funds for the band through a silent auction held during the dinner. Highlights of the night included, the Selkirk Grace, piping of the haggis, “Address to a Haggis” and Scottish Country Dancing.

Those in attendance with Military Engineer connections included from

- 39 CER - Hol Col Bill Diamond
  
- 6 Engineer Squadron
  - Major Stephen Piers, Officer Commanding
  - Sgt Feasby
  - MCpl Firth
  - Cpl Wotherspoon
  
- J.P. Fell Pipe Band
  - Alex Chisamore, former Pipe Major and former member of 6 Field
  - Capt Kay Boysen, former CO of 2573 RCACC
  - Liz Deas-Dawlish, former member
  
- Former members of 6 Field Squadron
  - HCol (retired) Jim Happer,
  - Major (retired) Bob Irving and former CO of 2573 RCACC
  - Sgt (retired) Monty Black, and
  - Col (retired) Bill White, President of the 39 CER Association

## **CRANBROOK ARMOURY OFFICIAL OPENING**

1. This January 39 CER officially opened its newest armoury in Cranbrook as an extension of 44 ES. This was the result of a long and torturous road that through the recent efforts of 39 CER members came to fruition. In 2008, LCol William Wenman (39 CER's first CO), initiated a request to brigade HQ seeking authorization to expand into Cranbrook which unfortunately stagnated due to lack of attention by Brigade Staff. Cranbrook is the largest city in South Eastern BC ranking # 18 in population size in BC and has a stable and growing economy. Since the early 1990's, 44 ES has had a small contingent of dedicated members who hail from Cranbrook. Over the years these members have paraded in various halls through ad-hoc arrangements. In 2012, in order to support the growth of the Combat Engineers in BC, Real Property Operations leased a building from the Cranbrook Cadet Corps to be used as an armoury. However, the soldiers parading with the Cranbrook detachment had to share the building with the Cadets, and there was no dedicated office or storage space. In 2015, OC Admin (Maj Achim von Wiedner) initiated a new effort to formalize the Regiment's presence in Cranbrook and successfully obtained an establishment change (EC 49444 with an effective date of 1 December 2016) to locate a Heavy Equipment Troop to Cranbrook. It is anticipated that a recruiter will be hired on a Class B contract to provide a full time presence in the City.

The success of the recruiting effort and the completion of the Establishment Change Proposal to geo-locate a Class B position from Trail meant that a more suitable facility was required. The search for a new armoury began in earnest in 2018 with the development of a Statement of Requirement (SOR) and newspaper advertisements soliciting proposals from interested property owners. The mandatory and preferred evaluation criteria and scoring method were included in the SOR so that the selection process would be as fair and transparent as possible. A total of eight proposals were received by the closing date and a panel, which included the CO (LCol James Julien), OC 44 ES (Maj Leah Wilson), RSM (CWO Charles Rochlow) and Properties Officer of RP Ops Chilliwack Detachment (Former OC 54 ES Maj (ret'd Grant Acheson), was convened to complete the evaluation.

2500 Cranbrook Street was selected as the preferred proposal. The site has good exposure for attraction of potential recruits. Its size gives room for further growth. The building is 762 sq m. The building is in good shape and well suited for DND's needs. The parcel is large at 2.76 acres and provides ample parking as well as space for training. On 1 November, a lease was executed with the landowner. Future work will include a new water service to the building, site work to include a military vehicle sign, signage and interior renovations. Most of the fit up work will occur in the summer of 2019 during Unit stand down.

On Saturday 19 January 2019, the Regiment officially opened the new armoury. Below is the news article of the Cranbrook Townsman that details the event:

*44 Engineer Squadron's new Cranbrook armoury officially opens  
Barry Coulter*

*The Canadian Army and the City of Cranbrook celebrated the start of a greater presence in the community with the official opening of a new armoury for 44 Engineer Squadron at the end of Cranbrook Street North.*

*44 Engineer Squadron, a reserve regiment of the Canadian Forces, is part of 39 Combat Engineer Regiment, in turn part of 39 Canadian Brigade Group. It is based out of Trail and Cranbrook, and is made up of combat engineers and other support trades from both Cranbrook and Trail.*

*Following a well-attended open house, with displays and recruitment information available, an opening ceremony was held.*

*The 44 Engineer Squadron grew out the Kootenay Battalion, formed during the First World War. After that war and through the Second World War, various restructuring by the Canadian Army eventually led to the creation of the unit.*

*“The Engineer Squadron was stood up in 1955, and has been a permanent fixture in the City of Trail since.” Capt Fyffe said.*

*“And now, in 2019, we have a permanent residence in Cranbrook, as the Cranbrook troop has moved out here with their new armoury.”*

*The new armoury is part of a planned expansion of the unit in the Kootenay region. Until now, the squadron’s Reserve combat engineers have been parading in Cranbrook out of temporary accommodations. Needing more space for equipment and its growing numbers, the unit signed a lease for a new location last October.*

*Lieutenant Colonel James P. Julien, Commanding Officer 39 Combat Engineer Regiment, offered welcoming remarks, mentioning all the work that had gone into the establishment of the new armoury.*

*“We did a regimental full court press, if you will. We brought in guys from the Lower Mainland from the Regiment to join our brothers and sisters in Trail and Cranbrook to put this together.”*

*LCol Julien especially praised Major Leah Wilson, Officer Commanding of 44 Squadron.*

*“Signing of the lease for this building, the selection process, all the inspections that have to happen, that all takes time. It’s been at least a two year uphill slog for Major Wilson to get us here. Lots of other players had a lot to do with it. But Leah, you knocked it out of the park [to get this building.]”*

*LCol. Julien also announced that Private Mark of the Squadron would receive a trident honorary coin for displaying feats of strength during a Brigade bridge-building exercise.*

*Col Paul Ursich, Brigade Commander, 39 Canadian Brigade Group, said that his “great hope is that the opening of the new armoury ... marks the next stage in the evolution of the relationship between 39 Combat Engineer Regiment and the Canadian Armed Forces and Cranbrook.*

*“This facility will be a fantastic base of operations for Cadets as well as for serving members of the Reserve.”*

*39 Canadian Brigade Group, Col. Ursich explained, “is the Army in British Columbia. There are 11 units, like 39 Combat Engineer Regiment, everywhere from Cranbrook to Victoria and as far north as Prince George. There are almost 2,000 soldiers in that Brigade, and most of them are part-time people who have another life outside the military.”*

*One of the roles of the Army Reserve is to support operations, Col. Ursich said. “It’s a key role ... whether that’s World War One, where we’re going off to a full-scale war, or whether it’s a UN operation, or a mission in Afghanistan, or a domestic operation, like we’ve seen in British Columbia in the last two summers.*

*“Part of what the soldiers here are going to be doing is to be ready for that kind of stuff. It’s another way for the City to help contribute to Canadian operations in support of our own communities such as Cranbrook.”*

*In the next year, the 3rd Canadian Division (Army of the West) is going to be deploying a number of soldiers overseas, Col. Ursich said. “Some of them may be coming from Cranbrook. As a community, realize that some of your soldiers may be overseas in places like Iraq, the Ukraine, Latvia ...”*

*Mayor Lee Pratt also spoke, about the benefits the enhanced presence of the military would bring to Cranbrook.*

*In the Army Reserves the role of engineers includes constructing and maintain roads and airfields, building bridges, providing safe drinking water, constructing defences, detecting and disposing of mines, as well as operating heavy equipment.*



Pictured: Col. Paul Ursich, Commander of 39 Canadian Brigade Group, and Cranbrook Mayor Lee Pratt cut the ribbon to officially open the new Cranbrook armoury for 44 Engineer Squadron at an open house and opening ceremony Saturday, Jan. 19. Left to right: MWO Shane Batch, HCol Bill Diamond, CWO Bryan Gardner, City of Kimberley councillor Nigel Kitto, Col Paul Ursich, Mayor Lee Pratt, CWO Charles Rochlow (obscured LCol Jim Julien), MP Wayne Stetski, Maj Leah Wilson.

Barry Coulter photo

## CRANBROOK ARMOURY OPEN HOUSE

Following the opening ceremonies members of 44 ES displayed some of their equipment and showed the public the tools of their trade.



Cpl Hansra in the foreground and Pte Brent in the background displaying and explaining the usage of various pieces of equipment to citizens of Cranbrook.

## **BRIGADE COMMANDER'S COIN PRESENTATION TO PTE MARK**

On 19 January 2019, Col Ursich, 39 CBG Comd, presented Sapper Mark with a Brigade Commander's Coin for his extraordinary efforts during Exercise Paladin Response. Sapper Mark achieved a double pinner on the ACROW during Ex PR - this means he nailed a pin so hard during the strip that it shot out and knocked out a whole other pin. This is a rare mark of skill and power - quite a feat if you think about the physics. During the bridge build he demonstrated the agility of Spider Man crawling around up on the panels.



**39 CBG CONFERENCE RANKING BOARD, COMMANDER'S WORKING GROUP  
ST. EUGENE RESORT & CRANBROOK ARMOURY OPENING - 18 – 20 January 2019**



Specifically timed to coincide with the Cranbrook Armour Grand Opening and Open House, the annual Commander's Conference (Ranking Board) was held at the St. Eugene Resort in Cranbrook and was attended by the Commander of 39 CBG, Colonel Paul Ursich, Deputy Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Cameron McLean, BSM, CWO Bryan Gardner, 39 CBG staff, the CO and RSM of each unit and Honoraries. Engineers in attendance were the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Julian, the RSM, CWO Bryan Gardner, and Honorary Colonel Bill Diamond. The Conference started with a Meet and Greet on Friday evening and an early start on Saturday morning. Topics on the program included the Commander's Opening Remarks, followed by the Ranking Board with concurrent meetings of the Honoraries covering a multitude of topics, including Ex. Paladin Response, Ex. Maple Resolve, Operational Tours (Latvia & Ukraine), Recruiting, Trade Qualifications, CFLC presentation by RLO Colonel Scott Raesler, Armoury South of the Fraser, Cadets, Unit Clerks and employment. Presentations regarding unit support of Cadet Corps were delivered by Honorary Colonels Hoffmeister (SHoC) and Hawthorne, and an excellent presentation (including buttered popcorn and beverages) regarding Honour House and Honour Ranch by Honorary Colonel Al De Genova. Honorary Colonel Diamond, 39 CER, provided a comprehensive update on The BC Military Gala (May 11) and full details of the latest meeting of the National Council of Honoraries.

The proceedings of the Conference were adjourned in the mid afternoon to enable the attendees to be a part of the official dedication of the 39 CER Cranbrook Armoury, the new home of 44 Engineer Squadron's Cranbrook Detachment.

## **INAUGURATION OF FORMER MEMBER OF OC 44 ES AS CHIEF OF LOWER KOOTENAY BAND**

On the evening of Friday 25 January Major Nils French and Sergeant Derek Shiell of 39 Combat Engineer Regiment (39 CER) attended the inauguration ceremony of Chief Jason Louie, a former member of the unit. Major French was honoured to guide both Chief Louie and Councilor Sandra Luke through the oath of office during the ceremony, which was held in a traditional roundhouse on the territory of the Lower Kootenay Band in the Creston Valley.

Chief Louie, who was elected to his third term as Chief of the band, proudly gives credit to his military experience for playing a part in his success over the years. Chief Louie has many fond memories of his time with the 39 CER as part of the 44th Engineer Squadron in Trail and having the regiment play a part in the ceremony held great meaning for him personally. Major French and Sergeant Shiell greatly appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the occasion and to experience some of the culture of the Ktunaxa Nation.

The Lower Kootenay Band, or Yaqa Nukiy, is one of several bands of the Ktunaxa Nation that extend across the reserve recruiting area served by 44 Engineer Squadron, which now has an armoury in Cranbrook. Major French and Chief Louie look forward to working together to ensure that the many opportunities the Canadian Armed Forces provides are available to the youth of the Ktunaxa Nation so that this proud history of service may continue in the years to come.



Image 1 - L to R: Major French, Chief Louie, Sgt Shiell

## **ON THE ROAD TOO HIGH READINESS (RTHR)**

By Major Robert Alliston MSM, CD

My journey on the RTHR began in the spring of 2018 with making a commitment to be a part of the leadership for the IA (Influence Activities) Coy that was being stood up as part of 1 CMBG (Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group). I was selected to be the G9 / IACC O (Influence Activities Coordination Centre, Officer), this involves coordinating the effects of the combat enablers; EW (Electronic Warfare), CIMIC (Civil Military Cooperation), PSYOPS (Psychological Operations), PAO (Public Affairs Officer), and the Padre in the battle field and selecting non-lethal targets as well as organizing and conducting KLE's (Key Leader Engagements).

The fall of 2018 began with a slow paced work up training with the newly stood up 11 IA Coy, conducting training on weekends as IA is a Reserve Capability and concluding with two HQ EX's before Christmas. January 2019 saw me starting full time employment in Edmonton, working jointly out of 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division HQ and 1 CMBG HQ. During the first couple of weeks my team began the OPP (Operational Planning Process) Cycle for Ex Unified Resolve 19 which saw all the HQ's of 1 CMBG and subordinate HQ's involved and working within a Coalition Environment.

In the next couple of months 11 IA will be involved in finishing all IBTS (Individual Battle Task Standards) and job specific BTS (Battle Task Standard) prior to the Bde (Brigade) validation at Ex Maple Resolve.

On completion of Ex Maple Resolve, all members of the Bde will remain on High Readiness for one year, this is to respond to any conflict or emergency situation that may develop throughout the world. They will also fill the positions on Canada's overseas operations. Presently Canada is involved in three major missions: OPERATION UNIFIER a mission to support the Security Forces of the Ukraine; OPERATION REASSURANCE a mission to support NATO in Central and Eastern Europe as an assurance and deterrence to reinforce NATO's collective defence and show the strength of Allied solidarity; OPERATION IMPACT's mission scope is to support the Global Coalition in its efforts to degrade and defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria. This mission has recently been expanded to involve a training component, where Canada alongside its partners, will train Iraqi soldiers to improve Iraqi Security Force capabilities and aid the Iraqi's in achieving long-term success in keeping its territory and people secure.

As with most Reservists who have volunteered to undertake this training it is my goal to secure a position on one of Canada's ongoing missions.



KLE with UNOCHA prior to Ex Unified Resolve 19

## PROMOTIONS



Sgt James Ingram being promoted to his new rank 5 Feb 19 by DCO Maj Ward Trythall. Sgt Ingram is the Regt (Reg F) Transport NCO and is posted to 1 CER this summer as a Section Comd.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Hello all, well this is our second newsletter I am pleased to acknowledge the articles that we have received from members of 39 CER and 6 Field Engineer Squadron Museum Association and to our editor Achim von Wiedner for pulling it all together.

Of significance in these last few months was the opening of the new Armoury in Cranbrook. The event was well publicised in the community with a number of radio spots including an interview with the OC, Major Leah Wilson. Consequently many came to the open house and stayed for the opening ceremony.

I was impressed with the members of 44 ES and 54 ES who were there to put on the displays and interact with the public. A particular highlight for me was, for the first time, seeing the MGB model, what a fantastic training aid.

A number of serving and retired members also attended the Robbie Burns Supper at the LCol J.P. Fell Armoury, North Vancouver which is the annual fund raiser for the J.P Fell Pipe Band. Being of Celtic blood I confess that I am a partial to a wee bit o' haggis.

Priority for the Association is to grow in numbers and it is hoped that occasions such as the change of OC 44 ES in Trial will be an opportunity to boost our strength and for both retired and serving members to celebrate this milestone in the life of the Regiment.

Chimo  
Bill White, President

## OBITUARIES

Rev. Charles R. WALTERS, B. Th.  
19 July 1927 – 30 December 2018



Padre Charles Walters was the Padre to 6 Engineer Squadron, North Vancouver for many years.

"It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Charles Walters, at the age of 91, at his home in Lynn Valley. Charles will be remembered for his warm, pastoral and compassionate care to all those who came to him for comfort. He will be forever remembered by his loving wife Aukea, daughter Lucia (Colin), son Andrew (Miku), his grandchildren Amaiya, Sienna, and Bianca, his brother Hugh (Addie), and nephews Hugh, Roger, and Charlesworth."

The memorial service was held Saturday, January 12 at 2 p.m. at St. Martin's Anglican Church, 195 E. Windsor Rd., North Vancouver. Donations may be sent to St. Martin's Anglican Church Memorial Fund, V7N 1J9.

The service was well attended with an overflow of people being accommodated in the basement of the church. 6 Field and the Regiment were well represented by;

HCol Bill Diamond, former HCol Jim Happer, DCO 39 CER Major Ward Trythall and Iska Scholl, Jessica and Jeff Becker, Bob Irvine, Doug Turnbull, Henry Norrberg, Vince Larocque and Julianna Pasko and Bill and Carol White.

Padre Charles, started his ministry as a server at St, John the Divine Cathedral in Antigua, British West Indies. He immigrated to Canada to study at the college of Emmanuel and St Chad, and obtained his theology degree there in 1966. Later that year he was ordained as a Deacon. In 1967 he received his Bachelor of Theology from Divinity College in Pineland, Florida, USA. His ministry then took him from Carcross, Yukon to Alert Bay, B.C. On 18 October 1967 he was ordained as a Priest. He then served at St Peter's Anglican Church in Slave Lake, Alberta. He received training as Chaplain and a Commanding Officer in order to start an Army Cadet Corps. He was seconded to CFB Cold Lake, Alberta as Chaplain for the Royal Canadian Air Cadets, during the summer months for 11 years and rising to the rank of Major.

In 1980 the family moved to Squamish, B.C. where he was the Priest-in-Charge at St. John the Divine Anglican Church for 6 years. During that time he was invited to take over the chaplaincy of the Canadian Naval Station in Aldergrove B.C. He served until his retirement in 1997.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

4 April 2019 (Thursday) 1830 hours – 39 CER Association Annual General Meeting (telecon in each armoury)

6 April 2019 (Saturday) – Handover of command 44 ES from Maj Leah Wilson to Maj Nils French in Trail

11 May 2019 (Saturday) – BC Army Gala at Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre

8 Jun 2019 (Saturday) – D-Day Dinner (Regimental Mess Dinner) at Lieutenant Colonel J. P. Fell Armoury (6 ES)