

41st Regiment of Foot (Military Living History Group) JOURNAL



Pioneer Terry Woods talking an enthusiastic and attentive audience of future reenactors at Mississinewa, 2003

2003 SEASON A VERY GOOD ONE!



She blew up real good! The bastion exploding at Fort Erie, 2003.

The 2003 reenacting season for the Regiment was a very good indeed. After a winter of drill, our first official event was the Battle of Longwoods in early May. Ten members were present over the week-end, and the weather was excellent - at least much better than the weather on the original battle day, and much warmer than the previous year when canteen water froze.

Later in the month the 41st represented almost the entire British line at the revived event at Fort Meigs, Perrysburg. The welcome the Regiment received has guaranteed a return for next year.

Stoney Creek, on the 6-8 of June was again helped by excellent weather, good crowds and some exciting battle innovations. This week-end saw the appearance in our ranks of one "Mad Dog", who needs careful watching. I am grateful to Sgt. Major Hartwick for his discipline of the errant musketeer!

Fort George on the 18-20 July saw our ranks enhanced with a guest from the UK, Private John Greig of the IXth Regiment of Foot, fresh from adventures in Spain. The week-end was a fine one, although the weather was - as usual - hot.

In August, the Amherstburg Time Line and the Siege of Fort Erie were well-attended, and, as always fine events. For the second year the 41st acted as the Forlorn Hope in the attack on the fort - great excitement indeed. The Friday night storm did nothing to dampen our enthusiasm, and it was good to have members of the 10th Royal Veteran's Battalion, and the De Meuron Regiment, in the persons of Don Zorniak, Barry Webb and Fred Carsted, brigade with us for the week-end.

A small contingent attended Mississinewa in October to round out the season. Our attendance this year at events was up, our drill and battlefield demeanour noticed with favour by officers and staff. Well done all.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, October 6th at the Winchester Arms, Dundas, and eight members were present. Our Executive for the coming year is President: Ray Hobbs; Secretary: Tom Fournier and Treasurer: Andrew Bateman.

We also received into membership Don Zorniak of Winnipeg, Alex Harling of Simcoe, Kimball Toderian of Niagara Falls and Todd Webber of Ottawa. Todd is currently serving with the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, and will return early in the New Year. We wish him safe and well.

We continue to grow, and have received several inquiries from others interested in joining the Regiment. Our current paid-up membership consists of eighteen, with three more 'waiting in the wings'.

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE AT AMHERSTBURG

On November 11th, Sgt Hobbs, Ptes Yaworsky, Woods and Fournier attended the Amherstburg Remembrance Day parade. Our presence was appreciated in keeping alive a vital part of the history of the town. Lunch was had, as usual, at Don Luciano's, which seems to be becoming our unofficial home away from home.

UK VISIT BY PRESIDENT

Ray Hobbs

Although I was in London the same two days as George W. Bush, this is about my visit, not his! On Nov. 14th I flew to the UK, and spent the next five days in Kew, Richmond where I conducted work at the Public Records Office, now known as the National Archives. This is an amazingly rich resource for historical research of all types. My focus was on British Military Chaplaincy during the time of the Napoleonic Wars, including the War of 1812, and I was overwhelmed by the amount of material available. All the correspondence between the Chaplain General's Office and that of the Secretary at War is there to read, plus supply warrants, commissions and occasional correspondence to serving chaplains. Coming away with fifty pages of handwritten notes made me feel that my time there was very worthwhile. Of course, it tempts me to spend much more time there.

The organization of the Archive is very user-friendly, and costs nothing to the researcher. Reader-cards are available for three years at a time. The website is excellent, and the staff were among the most helpful and organized I have ever encountered.

After the NA I journeyed to Wales - to "Welch Regiment Country" - and spent some time with my uncle and cousins. My cousin's horse farm, "Llwnau" (pronounced "Flunneye") was once owned by an officer in the 24th Regiment of Foot, a Colonel Jones.

I spent a great day with the 41st Grenadiers at Cardiff Castle on the 23rd in drill and fellowship, and had a very profitable meeting with John Dart, Curator of the Welch Regiment Museum. We have good friends in Wales.

After a brief visit to my in-laws, I returned to London and on my last evening had dinner with Richard Holmes and his wife and daughter. This was a renewal of an old friendship, and a great time to catch up on each others news. I was amused to know that Richard had given a lecture at Cardiff the week before, and addressed the Welch Regiment Veteran's Club. The guard was the 41st Grenadiers.

All in all an excellent trip - but far too short.



DRILL SCHEDULE

Our Winter Drills are now almost half way through. In the Hamilton region three drills have been held at the Caldwell's Farm in Lynden, and three more are scheduled for January 10th, February 14th and March 13th. We also plan to have a Regimental Drill at Fort Malden on April 3rd. The Regular Fort Malden drills have received a slight setback, but we hope to have them back on track asap.

Don Ruettan, of Kitchener, Ontario, attended our Drill on December 13th. (See picture on right) Don has been in contact with us for the past couple of months, and is looking for an 1812 regiment to join. We try to persuade him that he will look very good



in red facings! Don is extremely good with his hands and has made an excellent period canteen. He is currently working on some cartridge boxes, and has donated to the Regiment a pike-head and ferrule for a sergeant's pike. Great work, Don.

At this rate, Don could well be added to our list of recommended equipment makers.

2004 SEASON SHAPING UP

The coming season is shaping up well, as the Crown Forces Staff work hard. At our AGM we decided to adopt as our "all-up", Official Events, the Grand Encampment at Fort Meigs, May 29 - June 1; the Lundy's Lane/Chippewa week-end on July 2-4, and the Siege of Fort Erie, August 6-8. Of course other events in the season will be authorized, so that members may attend. However, at the official events all members are expected to be present. For the Fort Erie event we shall be hosting a contingent of the 41st Grenadiers from Cardiff, Wales. It will be a great opportunity to show them some of the 1812 sites in the region. Billets have already been found, and we look forward to a great time with them.

Put the dates in your diaries now, and check the War of 1812 Yahoo site for the dates of other events that you will be attending.

NEW BOOKS

A few new books have come across my desk recently, and will be interest to members. The National Army Museum continue their excellent series on wars told through the diaries and records of the participants. To date they have produced books on the Zulu War, the Boer War and the Turkish Front 1915-1918 during the First World War. The most recent offering is Andrew Uffindell's *The National Army Museum Book of Wellington's Armies: Britain's Campaigns in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, 1808-1815*. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 2003). pp. 361, ISBN - 0 283 07348 9. £30, or \$66 Cdn. It is an excellent selection of primary material drawn from the Army Museum's own records at Chelsea, woven together into a straightforward chronological narrative of the campaigns. A very good read, and well-worth having as a reference work.

Also recently published is Mark Urban's *Rifles: Six Years With Wellington's Legendary Sharpshooters*. (London: Faber and Faber, 2003). pp. 351, ISBN - 0 571 21680 3. \$45 Cdn. British reviews of this work have been very positive. It is very detailed, well-documented and well-written.

B.J. Bluth's *Marching with Sharpe: What it was Like to Fight in Wellington's Army*. (London: Harper & Collins, 2001). pp. 208. ISBN - 0 00 414537 2. \$36.95 Cdn. covers the same material, but in much less depth. It contains many photographs of original kit, and also of modern Napoleonic reenactors. Unfortunately, some of the pictures detract from the work.

Robert Malcomson's *A Very Brilliant Affair: The Battle of Queenston Heights 1812*. (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2003). pp. 328. ISBN - 1 896941 33 8. \$37.95 Cdn. Is up to Malcomson's standard of meticulous research and writing. It is the only major work available on this important battle. There are some minor errors in the work, of which the author is aware. The second printing will clear these up.

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