



The Military History Society of Manitoba
134 Marion St. Winnipeg, MB
R2H 0T1 www.mhsm.ca

Fall 2013

Editor's Message

Welcome to the latest issue of the newsletter of the Military History Society of Manitoba. A quick introduction of myself for those I have yet to meet. I am Warren Otto and agreed to serve as newsletter editor after being approached by our President. I have worked at the University of Manitoba for over twenty years and currently serve as the academic advisor with the Military Support Office. I first became interested in military history in the early 1970's after reading the *How and Why Wonder Book of World War II* (which I still have). Other than reading books I never became active until joining in the Maple Leaf Legacy Project www.mapleleaflegacy.ca in the late 1990's. Since that time I have met many great people, some of whom have become close friends.

Since this is your newsletter (recall I am only editor), if there is something you would like to share, drop me a line at mhsmeditor@gmail.com. I am happy to receive any articles, book reviews, links to interesting stories or events, etc. that can be used in any upcoming publication. It is good way to become published and all newsletters will be eventually be added to the Society's website. You may notice that my interest lies in the First World War and any articles or comments I have may be directed in that direction. Anything you can add to balance out my bias is greatly appreciated.

If you are not yet a member of the Society, I encourage you to join using the application at the end of this newsletter. The price is certainly right, and in addition to meeting some interesting people, you have the satisfaction knowing you are supporting the preservation of Manitoba's military heritage.

Did You Know?

Free educational resources for Veteran's Week, 5-11 November, are now available for order from Veterans Affairs Canada. Please follow this link for information:

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/veterans-week/educational-resources>

President's Report

MHSM Executive and Board

As a result of the Annual General Meeting the following were acclaimed:

Bruce Tascona	President
Dennis Puranen	Vice-President
Alan Parkin	Secretary
Doug Fyfe	Treasurer
David Wawryk	Director
Warren Otto	Director
Grant Tyler	Past-President

I would like to thank all who stepped up to the plate to make the Society work and grow. This Executive comes from a variety of backgrounds and motivated to ensure the Society's growth and good governance. Finally I would especially like to thank Grant Tyler for all his work over the years on building the Society.

What's new in the Library?

The Library/Archives which is located in the Museum was the recipient this past summer of thirty-seven boxes of books from the City of Winnipeg Millennium Library. The library conducted a major cull of books from their collection and offered them to us. Special thanks to member Hugh O'donnell who facilitated this transfer of books

The donated collection includes twenty-five boxes of Jane Annuals on "Aircraft, Ships, Weapons Systems, infantry weapons" etc. Also received were the complete official Great War histories of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force. Every campaign volume comes complete with a set of corresponding maps. These histories were compiled in the 1920 and 30's. The entire acquisition will be a great resource for both amateur and serious researchers.

I encourage local members to visit the Library and Archives. Hours are Wednesdays 1200-1600 hrs., or by contacting Norman Malayney at nmalayney@yahoo.com

What's New at the Legion House Museum?

This past spring and summer the Museum expanded the exhibits through a variety of donations:

- A war time dated flight suit and boots along with an Irwin Parachute.
- The Fort Garry Horse Museum has been able to loan us inert small arms weapons.
- We now are able to enhance the 19th century exhibits with some weapons in the exhibit cases.
- Two long term loans from Parks Canada: We received a 1912 Universal Pattern Saddle, rifle bucket and wallets. This has made a fine addition to the Great War Exhibit. We also have received an exhibit on the War of 1812—highlighting various

shako plates, badges worn by the British Army and Canadian Militia during that conflict. As well we received a coat with accoutrements to the 1st Royal Newfoundland Regiment of that period.

All exhibit cases in the museum are now on stands with casters making it easier to move them around. The cases have also been raised allowing guest to view the exhibits at a more appropriate height. Recognition is given to Dennis Purannen and Dave Wawryk for their due diligence in making these stands.

The Museum is open every Wednesday at 1200hrs to 1600 hrs.; don't hesitate to visit and bring a friend. Volunteer opportunities are always available —**we need extra help as Tour Guides. Please call Bruce at 204-825-2961.**

Change of Address

I would like to draw your attention to the Society's new mailing address:

Military History Society of Manitoba Inc.
c/o Legion House Museum
134 Marion Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2H 0T1
Website: www.mhsm.ca

MHSM Welcomes Andy Robertshaw



The weekend of April 5 -7 saw the MHSM, and the Military Support Office and Summer Session at the University of Manitoba, host noted military historian Andy Robertshaw on a visit to Winnipeg. Robertshaw has a number of publications to his name, including *Digging the Trenches: Great War Archaeology*, and was lead historian for the BBC programs *Finding the Fallen* and *Trench Detectives*. He most recently served as military historian for Steve Spielberg's epic *War Horse*.

On April 5 Robertshaw related stories of trench archeology to a standing-room crowd at McNally Robinson Booksellers at Grant Park Shopping Centre. These stories told of the efforts taken to identify three First World War German soldiers discovered in the trenches of the Western Front. Following the presentation he appeared live on 68 CJOB's the Nighthawk with Geoff Courier, for a thirty minute question and answer.

On April 6, Robertshaw was on the UM Fort Garry campus to relate his experiences working on the movie *War Horse*. He spoke of his role as military consultant to the movie and reiterated Spielberg's contention that the film was a drama not a war film, which was a

frustrating experience for a military historian looking to ensure accuracy. In addition to having a small part in the movie, Robertshaw was responsible for training 300 extras in the art of trench warfare.

April 7 saw Robertshaw visit the Fort Garry Horse Museum at McGregor Armoury and the The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders Museum at Minto Armoury. He was extremely grateful that museum staff took time on a Sunday to open their facilities for his visit.

By all measures Andy's visit was a huge success and the Society hopes to partner with the Military Support Office and Summer Session at the University of Manitoba in the future to host speakers and events as we move into the 100th anniversary of the First World War.

17 September 1916 – Manfred von Richthofen Downs His First Enemy Fighter and the Legend of the Red Baron is Born



World War I represented a monumental shift in the way opposing forces entered combat. Among the innovations in destruction employed in the conflict, tanks and poisonous gas are often cited, but no invention would change how nations fought quite like the addition of the airplane. Powered flight had been a reality for hardly more than a decade, yet its rapid advance naturally led countries to employ pilots in securing the skies -- none more famous than Manfred von Richthofen, the German flyer who would be referred to as the Red Baron.

Growing up as part of the Prussian nobility, von Richthofen lived in modern Poland as a boy. At the tender age of 11 -- roughly the time the Wright Brothers were taking flight at Kitty Hawk -- he entered a military school, eventually completing his education in 1911.

Joining a cavalry unit, he spent most of his early career working snoop on the activities on the armies of nations on Germany's always-contentious borders with Russia, France and Belgium.

In May 1915, while away from the front, von Richthofen noticed a military aircraft parked on the tarmac and immediately applied for a transfer to the Imperial German Army Air Service. Seeking to be engaged in battle more often, he hoped taking the controls of a plane would help him to do so. Within weeks, he was training as an observer, sitting behind the pilot and defending the aircraft with the machine gun mounted to his seat.

By October, after meeting with German ace Oswald Boelcke, von Richthofen had managed to find his way into the pilot seat. When he made his first flight the following March, he crashed. Considered by most to be inadequate, von Richthofen proved to be a quick study

and soon mastered the aerial ballet well enough to manage an unconfirmed kill over Verdun in April 1916.

Having gained a reputation as competent pilot by the end of summer, Boelcke tapped von Richthofen to join him in a new fighter squadron heading toward the Eastern Front. Dogfighting over Cambrai, France on September 17, 1916, he managed his first confirmed kill. Beaming with pride when he landed, the young German flyer headed to a jewelry shop in Berlin to order a silver cup with details of the victory engraved on it. By the time rationing prevented the sale of silver, he had 60 such trophies. Unwilling to have anything less than the best quality materials, he stopped buying cups to mark his triumphs.

Over nearly two years in service over the battlefields of World War I, von Richthofen would notch 80 confirmed kills, flying his trademark red airplane into battle and achieving hero status after the publication of his autobiography in 1917. Never a flashy pilot, he used solid tactical understanding and a simple downward attack (using the sun to blind his opponent) to put his excellent shooting skills to work.

Late in the morning of April 21, 1918, flying low over Morlancourt Ridge in northern France in pursuit of a British aircraft, von Richtofen was shot in the chest. Bleeding internally from lacerations to his heart and lungs, he managed to land safely just north of Vaux-sur-Somme dying just after members of the Australian Imperial Force reached his plane. (courtesy of mapsoftheworld.com)

Upcoming Events

*September 18, 1000 hrs. **Manitoba & the Centennial of the Great War*** by Bruce Tascona. St. James 55+, 3-203 Duffield Street. For registration information and fees: www.umanitoba.ca/extended/life. This presentation is partnered with the University of Manitoba, Lifelong Learning Centre.

October 6, Camp Hughes Heritage Day

- Please find more information on this event at the end of the newsletter

November 8-9, 2013 Symposium: The Coming of the Great War, The National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial, Kansas City MO. <http://ww1ha.org/2013symposium/>

- The event, featuring ten distinguished historians, launches the first in a series of centenary programs by examining the political, social, economic, cultural and military events between 1870 and 1913 that led to the Great War, 1914-1918.

November 14, 1300 hrs. ***Warpaths: Every Town Had Soldiers*** by Marc George. St. James 55+, 3-203 Duffield Street. For registration information and fees: www.umanitoba.ca/extended/life. This presentation is partnered with the University of Manitoba, Lifelong Learning Centre.

The Friends of Camp Hughes Present:

Camp Hughes Heritage Day

October 6, 2013

1100hrs—1500hrs.

For Further Information Contact:

Bruce Tascona

1-204-825-2961



Application Form

Name _____ Interests _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov _____

Postal Code _____ Email _____

Membership Fees:

Individual \$10.00 _____

Family \$15.00 _____

Institutional \$25.00 _____

Mail and Cheque Payable:

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c/o Legion House Museum
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