

CANADIAN MILITARY ENGINEERS MUSEUM

Report to the CME Association November 2015



Above: Pewter pint mugs from the 19th century and two reproduction William IV plates from the RA/RE Combined Mess flank the oldest piece of mess china in the collection, a mid 19th century plate from an RE Mess in BC.

Left: One of the vigil silhouettes with the Books of Remembrance.

The Museum has been very busy since the first CMEA Conference.

Exhibits have been updated, gallery themes modified and educational outreach expanded. The collection has expanded and a number of new vehicles acquired.

Since June, the Museum has been working with the Mapping and Charting Establishment to catalogue and arrange their archive and heritage collection. I have been working with WO Terry Warner to set up an east to use catalogue that meets the needs of MCE personnel who will want to search it for maps and documents, Rules of Archival description and the CF Artefact catalogue. We have created a prototype that we will be able to post on ACIMS, restrict access to those who are authorized to use it and that can be accessed from both ends and that the Museum can use to upload information to the Catalogue without having to retype the entries.

The collection will remain at MCE, but will become an annex collection of the Museum for control and insurance.

This system will be a test for being able to set up similar arrangements for CME Units who would like to add their heritage artefact to the Museum collection, but continue to house them in their Units.

THE EVINRUDE OUTBOARD MOTOR



Between May and September, MCpl Brown, MCpl Marchand and Sgt Rabishaw of CETS at CFSME reassembled the Evinrude model 8008 motor when they were not instructing courses.



Above: MCpl Brown and Sgt Rabishaw pose with the completed motor in the EGS workshop.



This motor was brought back to Canada from London in 2014 and donated to the Museum along with the motor at 2 CER Petawawa. It arrived in parts and over the summer was re-assembled by CFSME Instructors between courses.

SOME OF THE NEWEST ARTEFACTS



Left top: Belgian-made Eugene Lefauchaux revolver and Webley revolver collected during the Second World War but dating from the Great War.



Left bottom: The triplicate copy of the 11th Field Company, RCE War Diary with Appendices.

Right: Canadian Militia Engineers tunic, possibly from the Brighton Engineers. Corporal's chevrons are in the pocket.



The range of artefacts that come into the Museum are diverse and document all areas of the mandate, recently, gains have been made in artefacts from the Great War, the Second World War and the Colonial era.

ARTEFACTS ON THE MOVE



Left top: The photograph album the CMEA helped to rescue from a dumpster.



Left centre: AEV wheel that toured Canada to show the destruction capability of an IED and the threat our soldiers faced.



Left bottom: 1 ½ tri-wall shipment of documents from 1 CER for archiving.



Right: The Vimy Ridge cross for the 102st Battalion (North Vancouver) custom packed for shipment to the Rocky Mountain Rangers Museum.

We are still transferring to other CF Museums artefacts that do not pertain to the mandate. This ensures that non-Engineers artefacts are where they can be most readily accessible and it creates more room in our storage areas. Uniforms, insignia and medals are an ongoing project since 2010, but other items such as tools and documents are forwarded as they are identified.

By moving out non-Engineer artefacts, we have been able to create room to archive more recent Unit documents which we index for reference purposes should the Unit or researchers need access to that information. Often we are able to scan the documents to PDF and send by email what is needed.

ITEMS ADDED SINCE 2012



Left top: Two memorials repatriated from Afghanistan and installed on Remembrance Lane outside the Museum.

Left below: RCE Officers' Mess items on loan to the Army Officers Mess since 1996 were returned to the Museum in 2013, including this tea set from 1864.

Below: *The Paymaster's Trunk*, by Elaine Gobel.



A lot of significant items have been returned home to the Museum from Afghanistan and DHH tells us that there will be more as the Afghanistan Legacy Project progresses. The CME Museum is the first priority for receiving Engineer-specific artefacts as DHH would like to see the CME Museum as the centre for interpreting Engineer activities there.

CIVILIAN & MILITARY STUDENT EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Below: Lindsay Golding and Scott Aube, Co-op students from Oromocto High School spent four months learning about museum professions in 2013. Each researched and installed an exhibit in the Cold War gallery as part of their training.



Above: Every month the Museum highlights a selection of books from the TRC Library in one of the thirteen new jewel-box cases installed around CFSME.

The Museum staff have been operating the CFSME Reference Library. Between that and the Museum's archive, the use of the School's Training Resource Centre has expanded to the other CTC Schools and other Units within DND. We share information with the CTC HQ Library so that our holdings are accessible where needed by their clients.

The Museum has extended its interlibrary loan ability by setting up an Educator's borrowing account with the NB Public Library. This allows us to bring in supplementary and professional development reading materials that are not in the TRC libraries so that they are available to students and staff. This allows us to borrow from public and University libraries across Canada.

We have a lending agreement with the Oromocto High School Library to lend books to supplement their holding for special class assignments and for themed exhibits. OHS also looks to the CME Museum to place co-op students who are interested in Museum and Library careers.

MUSEUM LEARNING ON-SITE & ON THE ROAD



Left: Students of all grades visit the Museum for curriculum-based programmes to expand their studies on all aspect of Canadian Military history, including hands-on interaction with selected artefacts.

Right: Staff run training sessions for other Museums and organizations. Members of the PEI Community Museums Association listen to Arnold Smith talk about clothing during a session on dating photographs given by Sandra Penney in 2015.



Education is both in-house and on the road. Most in-house programmes are for high school students and youth groups like Scouts, after-school groups and Cadets of all services.

All-in-all CFSME Courses make up the majority of group tours, but groups from other sections on base and the area also come to the museum for history tours that have been tailored to their interests.

Arts and heritage organizations, units, and other museums have received collection advice and training from Museum staff. Training has been developed for the VIIIth Hussars Museum, and the Goose Bay Museum. The Curator has been mentoring the new NB Military Heritage Museum curator since 2013.

In March a programme on identifying the content of photographs was arranged by the PEI Regiment Museum was delivered to the community Museums of PEI.

EXHIBITS



Left: The cabinet of Mess china, crystal and silver installed on Command Boulevard.

Below: Plans submitted to Base CE for installing "Into the Breach" exhibit of armoured engineer vehicles on the lawn of CFSME.



Exhibits are continually updated as new artefacts arrive or are pulled from storage.

Jewel-case exhibits are spread around the School and the art collection is exhibited mostly in the upper halls.

Large equipment and vehicles have become an exhibition priority as storage space is rapidly filling. The AEV and AVLB scheduled to arrive between 2016 and 2018 have been approved by the Commandant for installation in front of J10. The Light Floating Bridge pontoon and BBE presently by the staff parking lot are scheduled to move in the spring to flank the bridge mounted dozer at J10.



The Museum's latest significant initiative rose out of an influx of toddlers and pre-schoolers stopping in during their walks this summer.

One difficult to navigate corner of the gallery has been re-furbished and named the Junior Sapper Apprentice Training Squadron in homage to our *Little Green Monsters*.

Building on the premise that fun exploration promotes learning, we consulted with early childhood educators to design an area that is engaging and friendly to children under 5 and that will also allow older children to explore



The Museum has applied for a Museum Development Fund grant to have made a secure exhibit case that can be used to exhibit the Mitchell Victoria Cross at remote locations in late 2018. The case would then be worked into the Museum's security system to exhibit the medal in the Museum.

The travelling exhibit will be a small overview of Lt.-Col. Mitchell's career with the Engineers and will be available in two versions – one with the Victoria Cross and hosted by a member of the Museum staff and one with a replica medal that can be sent independently.

The exhibit is intended to make available to all Units of the Branch a special exhibition to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the event for which Capt Mitchell was awarded the VC.

CONSERVATION & COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT



Since 2014, the Museum has been using a Museum Development Fund Grant to re-frame artworks to remove them from acidic environments and to provide protection while they are on exhibit.

On the right is an example of calcium deposited on a work by water leaking through the roof of the gallery.



Care of the collection through preventive conservation is ongoing, but we do undertake special conservation project on specific objects when grants can be secured.

Most recently, the RCE portraits, which are oil pastel on paper, we re-framed and glazed so that they can be returned to exhibition in the hall outside the Museum office. There are several works from the Great War and from the 1940s yet to be re-framed.