

Summer 2012, a Special Season

by Mehdi Mountassir

The Fraser season has been a special one. First, the museum was in full operation with a noticeable increase in the number of visitors. This adds a very interesting aspect to the job since it gives more value to the shows we perform. Having a crowd of fifty to sixty people watching the parade gives us the feeling that we don't work for nothing and, therefore, it really keeps the motivation of the squad up. The second reason this season was special is that for the first time since the creation of the modern squad at the Fort, a girl joined the team. Strange, you may say.

Well, time are changing and we have to change as well. Jenna Dennison joined the squad this summer and successfully completed the season. She proved her skills, took part in all the Fraser traditions and I couldn't be more proud of her.

The summer was filled with events and there was not a second to waste. The quality of both drill demonstration and pipes and drums was proof of the hard work and the determination of the squad to excel. Feedback from all over the place, especially from the museum's staff was very positive and let me tell you, it is very unusual that the staff throw flowers to the squad.

The FH squad took part in the Glengary Highland Games, the Montreal Highland Games and the Scottish day at Parc Jean-Drapeau. Our annual trip to Camp Massawippi was simply fantastic. Again, the campers enjoyed both performances almost as much as we did.

Fraser Day was rainy. Nevertheless, it was fun to see everyone's family enjoying the pipes and drums in the pouring rain. Great times.



Many thanks to Alec McGuckin and Dave McLeod for judging the piping and drumming solo competitions, and to Marie-Eve Valiquette for the dancing competition. Special thanks to Lt. Paul Goodman and LCol. Bruce D. Bolton, for their commitment and support to the squad.



Congratulation to the members of the Squad for their achievements. The pipes and drums sounded solid and consistent, and the drill was sharp and impressive. All in all, a wonderful season.

I enjoyed this year's season with the Fraser Highlanders immensely. It was an experience I will not forget. The work environment was fun and playing in the daily show was great. I hope I will be able to return next year and be part of the squad once more

by Pte Brenan Pinkerton Kock

Despatches



Editor

Milady Margaret Moore

Photographer

Ms. Cindy Canavan
Captain Earl Chapman
Milady Terry Stone

Layout

Milady Francoise Lambert

Contributors

Major Peter B. Ferst
LColonel Bruce D. Bolton
Lieutenant P. Goodman
Lieutenant Mike Gadue
Ensign Mehdi Mountassir
Pte Peter Pinkerton Cock

Comments, photos and articles
for future editions are welcome
and should be sent to:

The Editor, Despatches,
1195 Sherbrooke west,
Montreal, Qc.
H3A 1H9

or
Via email to:
moorepoineteclair@hotmail.com



Despatches

of The Fort St. Helen Garrison of the 78th Fraser Highlanders

Major Peter B. Ferst, CStJ CD, Officer Commanding

September 2012

OC's Report



Summer is now drawing in and that, of course, brings about the close of the forty-sixth season of the Fort St. Helen Garrison of the Fraser Highlanders. On August 10, one of the very few miserably rainy evenings of the summer, the Squad gave us a performance which was then followed by awards. The evening ended with a barbeque, the grill under the care and custody of Milady Roberta Bolton who, with Milady Jennifer Fallon, spent a good part of the evening in the rain, umbrella in one hand and utensils in the other. It would be remiss of me not to mention that LCol Bruce Bolton and Ens. Gerald Fallon also assisted and earned a good drenching.

An historic event took place this year in that the Squad welcomed into its ranks our first female piper, Jenna Dennison, who proved to be a great asset to the group.

Amongst the various awards given during the evening, the Harpers' Hero Award is one for which the Squad gets to choose the recipient. The Squad decided the award would be given to Garrison Officer, Lt. Paul Goodman. Paul spent a lot of time and travelled to a number of places with the Squad and they

wanted to mark their thanks and appreciation for his effort. Congratulations, Paul.

Despite the atrocious rain and storm a good number of Garrison Officers and Miladies as well as parents attended and I would like to thank, yet again, those attendees for their courage and devotion. The Squad members were very happy to see such a turnout and the evening was a great success.

I can also report to you that our annual Dinner Under the Stars was both a financially and socially successful evening. I was out the country spending almost two months in the vineyards of Alsace with my wife's family but fortunately the Regiment's 2 I/C (second-in-command), Captain Claude Larocque, was home on leave from his Police Mission in Cote D'Ivoire and was able to replace me.

Successful events do not happen on their own but are the result of the hard work of a dedicated team; so a big thank you the organizing committee.

A further joyful event took place at the Stewart Foundation offices in August where Senator David Angus awarded a number of our Officers and Miladies the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. I would like to congratulate all of the recipients who are listed further in this edition of Despatches.

Our Colonel Commandant, Colonel Robert G. Darling has convened a Commanders Conference for September 14th 2012 in the Kitchener Waterloo area, this to be hosted by the Fort Conestoga Garrison. For the first time all members are invited to participate in the activities that are planned around the conference. Invitations have been mailed to you. Captain Earl Chapman will attend the conference with me as we are permitted two official representatives per garrison.



Since the death last summer of our Garrison Adjutant, Captain Denis Moore, the position has remained vacant. I would like to announce that Lt. Paul Goodman has been appointed as Garrison Adjutant.

Paul, a dedicated member of the Command Group, has already been discharging many of the functions of this position and I and the Command Group look forward to working with him in this role.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of the Regiment and thus the squad.

Major Peter B. Ferst CStJ CD
OC Fort St. Helen Garrison

a good number of Garrison Officers the activities that are planned around

PMC's Corner What Did the Frasers Eat? – Cuisine Before and After Enlistment

by Lieutenant Mike Gadue

In a continuing effort to report to the regiment on the author's immersion in all things culinary, which may have practical application to our next mess dinner, I have been asked to write a short article on what our fearless Fraser Scots actually supped upon. After all, the fabled chiseled bodies of Highlanders in kilts must have had a modicum of support in what they consumed, and this causes one to question whether the conclusion that they ate well is fact or fiction.

My research starts with references to Colonel David Stewart's *Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland* as a basic research tool for matters related to both Highlanders and the military service of the Highland Regiments, including the Frasers. Col. Stewart addresses the means of subsistence of the general Highland population, stating:

The population... appears to have been greater than the means of subsistence (in times before the Rebellion, and sometimes after), with people subsisting chiefly on milk, prepared in various forms, while in winter they lived in great measure, on animal food, their cattle thriving on the poorest herbage; and with Spring came a season of severe abstinence.

I am tempted to believe that the current

marketing phrase "Got Milk?" originally came from a Highlander who consumed that milk in the following forms: raw-warm, raw-cold, fresh-raw, or various degrees of turning/ turned. This last form could be somewhat camouflaged by the addition of cereals, vegetables, or fruits making it into a kind of porridge. So, maybe it is not so surprising that the ordinary Highlander had a constitution like iron. He was likely a walking petrie dish.

Yet surprisingly, the strength, size, and stamina of Highlanders, possibly due to diet, has actually received the attention of another author, one who has no personal interest in the trials and tribulations of being a PMC. Stan Fishman, published author, has created a series of three articles on line that address the culinary reasons that support superior strength, healing power, and general superior war fight physicality of Highland soldiers.

Paraphrasing, he finds that the Scottish Highland diet was heavy in the use of raw milk, raw cheeses, raw butter, but most importantly, in the consumption of animals and fish, contrasted with a European diet of grains and vegetables. Additionally, because of the underlying poverty, Highlanders "ate the whole thing", deriving significant nutrients and minerals from what was the best, but often discarded, part of the animal. Additionally, sugar was seldom available and cereals such as oats were rolled into a ball with berries, as a kind of "Trail-Mix". Ever the entrepreneur, I wonder as a practicing attorney whether there could be a product called "Trail Mix" for hungry attorneys on recess in the midst of a trial. But of

course, there would always be the danger of contamination by those wishing to poison their, or the other side's, bar-risters, and so sadly, not a good idea.

Fishman's posts have, not surprisingly, garnered some vociferous comments, some agreeing, and some taking exception. Yet among the points made was a comment with which I agree, that undoubtedly, the over-all health of Highlanders was due in large part, to the availability of clean, potable, bracing water.

So my thoughts as your PMC will be that the menu for the next regimental dinner will include:

One glass of clear, refreshing water, refills allowed.

A side dish of oats, fruit and honey formed in the shape of a Scottish Thistle.

Several native Canadian wild moose, who have accepted our invitation to attend Several milch cows, which shall be milked in situ, by Colonels Bolton, Stuart, Finestone and Ferst, until all are served.

And what about the cuisine of Highlanders after enlistment? Well, we know that the common soldier often obtained a ration of salted meat, generally of poor quality, bread or biscuit leavened by sawdust and bugs, and grog, spruce beer, or turned water. And now you understand that once the Highlanders joined His Majesty's Forces, why they were truly part of the "Thin Red Line." Slainte.

Embedded with the Squad 2012

by Lt. Paul Goodman

Having had the pleasure and opportunity of accompanying, and in some cases participating in, several of our squad's summer activities I present this short summary for our interested readers. Following an annual tradition, eight squad members drove to Camp Massawippi in the Townships on the last Friday in July. It was a fine day and an enthusiastic crowd of campers and staff witnessed a neat display of marching, piping, drumming, dancing, musket drill and firings. The lads, our female cadet wasn't present, did a fine job. Of particular note was the patience and help offered to many of the disabled campers who courageously volunteered to fire a musket... an amazing experience most bravely attempted. Our lads fit in a swim, some attempted bonding with several of the female staff, and a boisterous display (my supper was partially launched off my plate!) thus fully participating in the typical camp dining room supper. I was told how much the visit was appreciated.



A few days later, at this year's Glengary Highland Games in Maxville, a fine display of our 1757 musket drill was on offer. This was well received by the audience on the first day of the games.



Ably commanded by the striking Ensign Mountassir, all members of the squad, except for one drummer, carried and performed their "firelock" drill with precision. The sole piper for this drill was 'Old Boy' Bolton- bonnie job- and to your reporter went the honour of carrying our regimental colour. I thought the second performance was even sharper. The crowd jumped and applauded at the discharges, the whiff of black power swirling in the air. It is fairly warm in full regimentals with accoutrements on a thirty degree Ontario summer afternoon.

This was followed with the squad's opening the Montreal Highland Games by firing a battalion canon. Unfortunately the musket drill was aborted owing to the wet weather that day.

The last activity to report on was the final parade at the Fort on August 10th in front of a loyal gathering of

regimental miladies, officers and friends. Again the weather played havoc causing the cancellation of the musket drill but the squad gamely performed a stirring display of their piping and drumming skills. This was followed by a gregarious, if tightly packed, meal in the guard room of the Fort. Special thanks to Miladies Roberta Bolton, Jennifer Fallon, and Francoise Lambert and HCol Bruce Bolton for barbequed chicken executed under the questionable shelter of an umbrella gallantly held by Ensign Gerald Fallon and to Monsieur Lambert who very kindly scouted out more corn on the cob for the hungry diners.

In conclusion it was a fine year for our 2012 squad—a marvellous group of talented and fit young men and our first young woman who proved themselves excellent representatives of the 46th annual version of the Montreal garrison's 78th squad.



Fraser Awards 2012



Best Piper

Cpl. Robert Kerr



Best Recruit

Pte. Olivier Rommelaere



Best Soldier

Pte. Brenan Kock



Best Drummer

Pte. Nicholas Gelinis



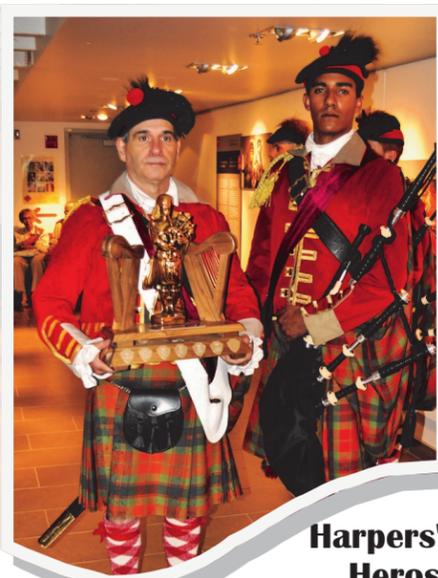
Oustanding

Pte. Nicholas Gelinis



Best Dancer

Pte. Nicholas Gelinis



Harpers' Heros

Captain Paul Goodwin

PMC's Corner: The Practical Dirk

by Lieutenant Mike Gadue

One might inquire why the Regimental PMC would have an interest in Scottish dirks as his focus usually centers on the welfare of the regiment through victualing. However, as most realize, Scottish dirks often came equipped with knives and forks, and therefore it seems that besides being a weapon for close combat, the dirk and its accoutrements may have had a very practical and culinary use. In this brief article we will examine the culinary and practical applications of the historical development of Scottish dirks.

Scottish dirks are historically evolved from one of four major categories of fighting knives, known as the Ballock knife. Though there is some debate, the Scottish dirk was recognized as a distinct pattern by the middle of the 17th Century, and was representative of personal and clan pride especially among Highland Scots. Increasing quality of workmanship, embellished hardwood grips, studded tacks, or carved knobs distinguished the single-edged, thick blade. Sheaths were designed to cover the blade, and from early on some "had pockets for a single byeknife, or a side by side knife and fork, or even a pair of small knives." Author's emphasis.

There can be no question but that the dirk, though considered as primarily a fighting knife, became a necessary tool for cuisine, especially on campaign. First, the heavy, thick blade, often fourteen inches in length, made for an overall dirk length of some twenty inches, and was especially useful in the field for chopping or shaving the small

branches and kindling necessary for daily cooking. Additionally, though much could be said about the lack of culinary delight of the British Commissary system, it is fair to say that in the period of the Regiment's existence (1757-1763), that 'cattle on the hoof' was a staple provided to each regiment.

Thus, undoubtedly dirks became a culinary tool used to cut up portions of beef and other staples necessary for the preparation of the daily meals, either by groups of soldiers, or when individually consumed by the dirk's owner, using his individual knife and fork. Though not the subject of a Robert Burns pastoral setting, it takes little imagination to picture several handsome Fraser Highlanders as gentlemen soldiers sitting around a fire on a grassy knoll, consuming their evening meal, dirk-forks held high, rhapsodizing on the quality of the fare. Or maybe not.

Though it would go too far to suggest that all or even most dirks had knives and forks, or the pair of small byeknives, we can assume that when commercially produced, the more expensive sets may have included such accoutrements, and from portraits, the handles of these cutlery pieces were often made from ivory. Additionally, many Highlanders were not averse to trying their hands at making their own dirks, often using discarded broadsword blades, and they may well have incorporated byeknives or cutlery.

At the time of the French & Indian War in North America, dirks for the 78th Fraser Highlanders were authorized for both Officers and Other Ranks, generally Officer's models being more costly and silver mounted. Other Ranks may have supplied

their own, as Sergeant James Thompson did, there being no record that Lieutenant-Colonel Simon Fraser purchased for, and supplied the Regiment.

The role of the dirk in culinary history is memorialized in Robert Burns' Address to the Haggis.

*His knife see rustic Labour dight,
An' cut you up wi' ready sleight,
Trenching your gushing entrails
bright,
Like ony ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin, rich!*

This translates as:

*His knife having seen hard labour
wipes
And cuts you up with great skill
Digging into your gushing insides
bright
Like any ditch
And then oh what a glorious sight
Warm steaming, rich*

The conclusion of the Haggis Ceremony and party is of course the salute to the exquisitely prepared haggis, in which the orator unsheathes his dirk, and plunges it into the haggis in preparation for serving it to the expectant and appreciative Highland crowd.

So, the next time you see a likely Victorian dirk with full set of cutlery, picture not only the bravery and courage of physical combat, but the much more prosaic satisfaction of a good meal well spent in the company of friends, Officers and Miladies of the Regiment. Again, *adieu* until next time culinarily speaking.

Slainte.

Once in a Lifetime

by Lt. Mike Gadue

The group that assembled early in the evening of July 4, 2012 at the Macdonald-Stewart Foundation's classical quarters on Sherbrooke Street, seemed at first appearance to be handsome, if older, men and women in suits, business wear and Highland dress, suitable for a board meeting. But this would belie their purpose, each individual having been invited to be the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, granted in commemoration of the sovereign's sixty year reign.

While some were surprised to be selected as recipients, all were deeply honored and touched. The group included some Officers and Regimental Ladies of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, of the Fort-Ste-Helene



Garrison.

The medals were presented by the Honorable David Angus who had just retired as Senator.

Included as recipients and in recognition of their work in the wider community were:

Maj. Peter B. Ferst,
 Captain Earl Chapman,
 Lieutenant Paul Goodman,
 Lieutenant Peter McAuslan,
 Lieutenant Romeo Vezina,
 Lieutenant Robert Wilkins,

Lieutenant Colonel Victor Chartier (President of the Quebec Thistle Council and Lieutenant in the 78th), Milady Susan Stevenson (Honorary Secretary St. Andrew's Society), Pipe-Major Brian MacKenzie (2nd Vice-President, the St. Andrew's Society of Montreal and an Ensign in the 78th) and Milady Moira Barclay-Fernie (former President of the St Andrew's Society of Montreal).

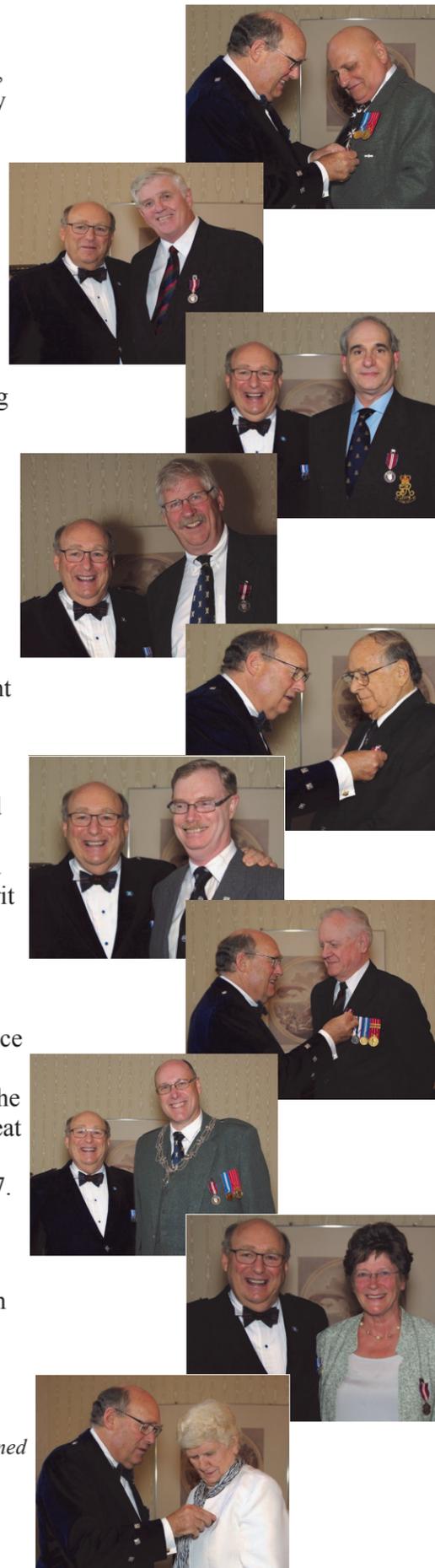
Not in attendance but also receiving the medal were Capt. Claude Larocque (on mission in Africa), HCol Liliane Stewart, HCol Mr Justice Kenneth MacKay, and Ensign T. R. Anthony Malcolm.

The Queen's Jubilee Medal, a recognition by Queen Elizabeth, is bestowed on deserving citizens of the United Kingdom and the present or former commonwealth for their contributions in support of their country and society. Canada has been allocated some sixty thousand medals for distribution among the military, fire and police, public and private institutions, and for the merit of individuals who have made "significant contributions and achievement".

For each of the recipients, it is a once in a lifetime honor that flows from the singular occasion recognizing the sixty year reign of Elizabeth II, a feat not equaled since Queen Victoria reached the same milestone in 1897.

To each of our recipients, a hearty cheer of congratulations for well deserved recognition, an inspiration to all. You do our Regiment proud!

(Pictures are in the same order as mentioned in article)



Not Just an Ordinary Lunch

by LCol. Bruce Bolton

At the 2011 Dinner Under the Stars, one of the silent auction items was "Luncheon for two at the Forest & Stream Club, chauffeured there in Jean-Paul Riopelle's Rolls Royce and piped in with a Piper". Now that's a pretty impressive prize and it was "won" by Mr. Ian Aitken, a great supporter of the Scottish community in Montreal and past President of the St. Andrew's Society of Montreal. It took a while to find a convenient date but on July 5th, it all came together.

Diana Wall, bedecked with chauffeur's hat and blouse, both with the Rolls Royce insignia, saluted as her guests, Ian and his wife, Mary Leslie, entered the car.

Unfortunately the rendez-vous point was the back lane of the Forget House - we could have just as easily made it in front of the Mount Royal Club! With piper Bruce Bolton in the front seat, we attacked highway 20 to Dorval and marvelled at the fine workmanship and solid (almost the feel of a tank) structure of the car as Diana navigated crazy Montreal traffic and construction zones.

On arrival at the Forest & Stream Club, photos were taken and the guests piped into lunch. In a not-so-

usual move for a Scottish laird, the piper and chauffeur enjoyed the magnificent lunch at the same table! Despite wanting to sit and enjoy the surroundings all afternoon, business time constraints saw the entourage having to leave efficiently and return downtown. Not just your ordinary lunch!

We express a special thank you to Diana Wall, who is the proud owner of Jean-Paul Riopelle's Rolls Royce and who is president of the Rolls Royce and Bentley Owners Club for the St. Lawrence Region.

No one can say that the silent auction at the "Dinner Under the Stars" doesn't offer unique prizes. Your turn next?





The last tune was appropriately played by our lone piper, evidencing the “Retreat” of our celebration, and the time to go home, a suitable close to a wonderful evening, remembering our Regimental heritage, and those that have gone before, as well as the promise of future occasion to meet and celebrate.

In addition thanks to the Pipes and Drums of the Black Watch (RHR) of Canada. We would be remiss if we did not recognize the ongoing support and interest of LCol Bruno Plourde, Commanding Officer, The Black Watch(RHR) of Canada. Thank you, Colonel Plourde.

See you next year; I wouldn’t miss it for the world.
Slainte,



“Dinner Under the Stars”- Regimental Dinner Dance, June 15, 2012

By Lt. Mike Gadue

The annual Dinner Under the Stars had several things going for it: the weather was perfect, the food as always was superlative, all participants looked impressive in their finery, and most important, it was the opportunity for renewed and additional camaraderie and friendship.

But this year was different for several additional reasons. The Stewart Museum had just opened for the season and, according to Director Guy Vadeboncoeur, the Museum was having a better year financially. Public awareness and, therefore, attendance had improved and it was also able to provide funding for an additional four members of our own student squad of the 78th Frasers. As the first full year of operation after a substantial refurbishment, the Museum looked its best and had new and enticing exhibitions that thrilled the crowd. This included a retrospective of kitchen and culinary hardware and artifacts from “Craving for design”.

The Dinner and the popular silent auction provided the opportunity for important fund raising to benefit our student squad. Among the poignant articles donated was a hand-painted sculpture, the last created by Fraser Captain Denis Moore, since deceased, which was well sought after by collectors and old friends. Additionally, many articles evidencing artistic taste, arts and

crafts, services, books, antiques, and likely the most popular, an exceptional single malt whiskey, were all well received. The bidding was high, proceeds to support our squad.



A highlight of the pre-dinner events was the presentation of the uniform of the late HLColonel Gordon Atkinson, by his family to the Garrison.

Ceremony and tradition were combined in the presentation of Commemorative Medals to those Frasers that had attended the 250th Anniversary of the fall of Quebec, 1759, and the end of hostilities in Montreal in 1760. These were also presented to Captain Laurent Ste-Marie, of the Compagnie Franche de la Marine, and André Delisle, Director of the Chateau Ramezay, from whose original one of our medals were cast.



We are always happy to see new members, and we welcomed Ensign Georges Gohier, Milady Marie-Christine Laperrière, Milady Suzanne Gleason-Bear, and Milady Shirley Pow-Chong. A well deserved promotion went to Lieutenant Peter McAuslan.

Thanks to Chair-Milady Janet Rankin-Hambleton and the members of the Fraser’s Gala Committee: Hon Lt.Col. Okill Stuart, LCol Bruce Bolton, Major Peter Ferst, Milady Nerelle Cooper, Milady Maura Wilkins, Milady Sylvia Deschênes, Milady Françoise Lambert, Milady Ellen Bounsall, Captain Claude Larocque, Ensign Gheorge Bota, Sgt.-Maj. Karl-Antoine Usakowski, and Ensign Mehdi Mountassir



To the many volunteers who added so much by their work, contribution, and steadfast support, a hearty thank you. Thanks also, of course, to our own squad of the 78th Fraser Highlanders. The gala was the first opportunity for our four new squad members to take center stage with the squad's old hands and to play as part of our enhanced Pipes and Drums. It was an excellent performance. Well done, Squad.

The evening would not be complete without “Dancing Under the Stars” with fine music provided by the Johnny Maloney Dance Band, and one of our own Frasers, Peter Limeburner, rendering an excellent sword dance. Surprisingly, after dinner when our squad members were demonstrating the firing of their flintlock Brown Bess muskets, the lines to partake in the firing experience were mostly filled by the ladies in attendance. One young woman was heard to remark to her friend, ready to fire next, “All you do, Kathy, is take a stable position, dig your high heels into the turf, and lean forward as you wait for the recoil.” Certainly none of the ladies fell down, so the advice may have been practical as well as stylish, but we shan’t be getting high heels for the squad!



How to fire a musket lesson.