

The
**Ontario
 Model
 Soldier
 Society**
 Founded 1962
 www.omss.ca



Monthly Newsletter for May 2020

Monthly Meeting Dates for 2020

12 January 2020 - 9 February 2020 – 8 March 2020
 5 April 2020 - **3 May 2020** – 13 September 2020, 18 October
 2020– 22 November 2020 - 13 December 2020

Annual Show
POSTPONED UNTIL 2021

Month Newsletter for May 2020

2020 Executive

Keith Ritchie
 President

Scott Millburn
 1st vice president

Vacant
 2nd vice-president

Gary Lenius
 Secretary/Treasurer

Lorne Farr
 Past President

Vacant
 Program Chairman

Ian Pearson
 Journal Editor

Scott Dummitt
 Annual Show Chairman

Scott Dummitt
 Newsletter Editor/ Media
 Officer

Dave Norman
 Facebook Page Manager

Frank MacKay
 Calendar Co-ordinator

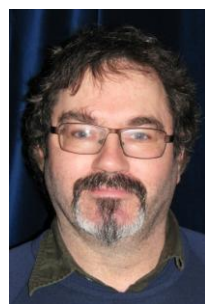
Jeff Duncan
 Club Table & Donations

OMSS Archivist
 Ian Pearson

Next meeting...

MAY 2020 MEETING CANCELLED

Branch 643 Royal Canadian Legion | 10 Jutland Road Toronto
 Meeting starts at 1:00 pm. Doors open 11:00 am



Letter from the President

“May” you all be staying safe and healthy, in these unprecedented times. We were unable to meet in April due to reasons beyond any of our control, and I regret that we will be unable to meet in-person in the next few months. I am cancelling the meeting scheduled for May 3. Also, as we had cancelled the June 13 annual show, we were still holding out the possibility of having a meeting on the next day, June However. That is not possible.

I have confidence that we will overcome this threat. As the governments state, we must pull together, as our parents, grand-parents, and other relatives and the rest of our societies pulled together to survive two world wars (and a Great Depression in between.) So we want to continue with the OMSS, even if we can't meet in person for a while.

A few things that we are doing.

First, we will proceed with preparing a calendar for 2021. There will be no pictures from the 2020 Annual Show – for a very obvious reason. However, we do have many pictures from past shows, and I would ask for Ian (of which more later) and others may also search for pictures of past members and their displays or collections, that could also be added to the calendar.

Second, I am asking Gary to update the roster and then to send it out to all members. It is important for us to keep in touch. We cannot right now meet in person, and “social distancing” is unnatural for us. As Aristotle observed, “Man is a social animal.”

I also want to thank Ian Pearson for stepping up to become editor of the Journal, replacing Brendan Hogan, who provided stalwart service for several years – but nothing compared to the stalwart service he provides to Canada (and hence us) in his main occupation. We thus want to continue to communicate. The Newsletter and the Journal will provide avenues for such communication. To this end, we also want to encourage members to submit articles for both the newsletters and for the Journal, which will be prepared later this year. Many of us find we have time on our hands, and we have kits and dioramas to make, and figures to display. (I certainly am doing this!) Take advantage of this opportunity to re-connect with your toy soldiers – or maybe to establish a connection with a prized find at some

... continued on page 2

... continuation of President's Message

show that you just hadn't been able to take out of the box. Our hobby is healthy for your sanity during these times. We want to know how you are all doing. Through articles. Through e-mails. Through phone calls. I know that not all are on Facebook, but we do have a Facebook page.

We are not making any decisions about the fall meetings, beginning in September. But we will be guided by government rules and the status of the Legion. And I, on behalf of the Executive, welcome your thoughts. We may not be as numerous as the soldiers in your collection, but all of us in the OMSS are thinking of each other. We will meet again.

Stay safe and stay healthy.

Keith Ritchie – OMSS President

Club Member Speak-up About How they are Keeping Busy with their Hobby

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone in the World in one way or another. We have seen the best in people, like the gentleman who stood on the street in Toronto and gave away personal hand sanitizer bottles for free, and the worst in people, like those that have bought up supplies of toilet tissue, or medical supplies and have been selling online at jacked up prices. But for the most part we in Canada shrug our shoulders and have listened to the various government agencies about social distancing and staying home. It has put a bit of a crimp into our meetings and our annual show, but hopefully we can weather this virus and meet again in the future. It just will take some time and a bit of self sacrifice. That being said, I have made a few changes to my own life style for the club. I will produce a Newsletter throughout the summer so that members can still feel involved, and I will stay on as Show Chairman for the 2021 show, as this year's show was cancelled. Another announcement is Ian Pearson has taken over putting out a Fall JOURNAL while Brendan Hogan is on deployment with the Army.

So how are our members coping through self isolation, well I approached a group of them to send me a half page on what they are doing with regards to our hobby, and here is the answers I received back.

GUY ELLIOT

It seems as I get older there is a growing distance between what I think in my mind and what I actually get around to doing. Over the years I have written numerous articles for the Journal and the two toy soldier magazines. Last fall I proposed an article for Mark Avery at Toy Soldier Collector magazine, created it in my brain and never got around to doing the writing or photography. At last year's Show I proposed an article for Stuart Hessney at Toy Soldier and Model Figure magazine. Same thing: created it, never got around to the doing. Well now I'm house bound and have no excuses. So I typed the article for Mark Avery, did the photos and sent it off. Then I wrote another article and photos and sent them along. Will he be surprised! Seven months with nothing and then two at once. Now I'm doing the article for Stuart Hessney and have another one to follow. This isolation is doing things to me. Then there are all those un-painted castings . . .

... Club Members continued on page 3

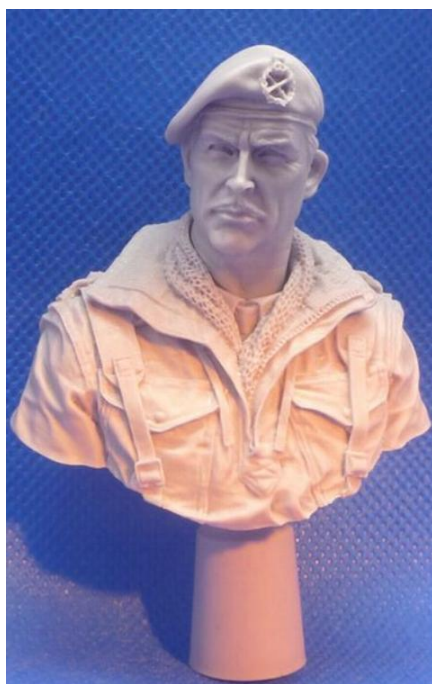
Frank MacKay

In response to the Editor's call for a short article on how modellers are coping during the Zombie Apocalypse, I thought I'd contribute a few words on my latest project. Sadly, my job is designated as an essential service so I have no more spare time than usual, but I always try to make a little time for the hobby I love.

I'm currently working on a large 1/10 resin bust with a few minor conversions. It took me a long time to accept busts as being a real part of the model soldier hobby, but after I broke down and painted my first one, I've grown to love them immensely. The large scale is very unforgiving and a real challenge to paint but it's a huge load of fun and I highly recommend them. I acquired a Chinese knockoff of the excellent bust of MGen. Roy Urquhart, which was originally produced by Young Miniatures of South Korea. It's a magnificent and realistic portrait of Sean Connery, who played the British Airborne commander in the 1977 movie *A Bridge Too Far*.

While the resin bust is spectacular as is, I wanted to turn his beret into a balmoral and transform him into the CO of the 48th Highlanders, circa 1961. Yes, I know you're shocked. It was easily done by carving off his cap badge and extending the beret into a more circular shape and adding a tourie on top using Aves Epoxy Sculpt. I can't praise this product enough; it's a blessing to modeling and allows you to convert basically anything you want. The tartan backing and cap badge over the left ear was sculpted from the same material and although the tiny cap badge was very tricky to sculpt, I'm pretty pleased with it. With the clay dried to rock hardness and the bust primed, I'm presently working on painting it. The British Airborne smock is all wrong of course, but when you're a LCol you can wear whatever you want. It also comes with an excellent pair of binos for around his neck.

Covid-19 hysteria has severely hampered the operations of the OMSS and will have far-reaching consequences for us for a long time to come. I must confess that I hope this enforced time apart will not be the end of us. The best way to stay interested and involved in the hobby is to buckle down and get painting. This isolation could end up being a gift to the OMSS--every single member now has the time to work on at least one figure for the 2021 annual show. Imagine what a spectacular show it will be if every member can accomplish that; bigger and better than ever!



Left: Original beret before conversion work

Right: Frank's new version of the 48th Highlander officer wearing a combat balmoral

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Brendan Hogan

Like many of you, I did not anticipate being stuck at home this spring. When North America and Europe started to ramp up their response to the virus, I was in Latvia for a NATO exercise. Fortunately, we were able to return to Canada, although we did have to do a two-week quarantine. I still haven't been back to the office yet, since the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Vance, has directed most personnel to remain at home to ensure that the armed forces can respond in whatever capacity is required. The army commander also cancelled the big exercise in Alberta that I was supposed to be attending. Since then, I've been working from home trying to figure out how to do pre-deployment training while respecting all of the new rules and guidelines. Running a shooting range is difficult when everyone has to be two metres apart, not to mention an artillery shoot!

with some soldiers from the French and Indian War and American War of Independence thrown in, but I do have a soft spot for the Great War. My particular favourites in the collection are - the W. Britain OMSS exclusive figure of Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie, the commander of the Canadian Corps; Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae writing "In Flander's Fields," which was the subscription gift figure from Toy Soldier & Model Figure magazine a few years ago; and the large Australian gunner, which fellow OMSS member Grant Lawson painted and kindly gifted to me. As a gunner, I also really like the



13-pounder and 18-pounder field artillery guns made by W. Britain and the heavy pieces made by John Jenkins (6-inch 26 To keep myself from going stir crazy, I've been trying to get as much of my thesis completed as possible. It examines the counter-battery work done by the Canadian Corps during the First World War. When I'm not busy reading or hammering away at the keyboard, I like to look at my small First World War collection. My toy soldier collection mostly comprises figures from the Napoleonic Wars

(including the War of 1812) and modern Canadian Armed Forces ceremonial figures, cwt howitzer and 60-pounder gun). Getting back to my thesis, the Canadian Corps used these heavy guns to blast the German artillery. And they were quite good at it! I hope that everyone in the OMSS can stay healthy and find some way to enjoy our great hobby!"

Ian Pearson



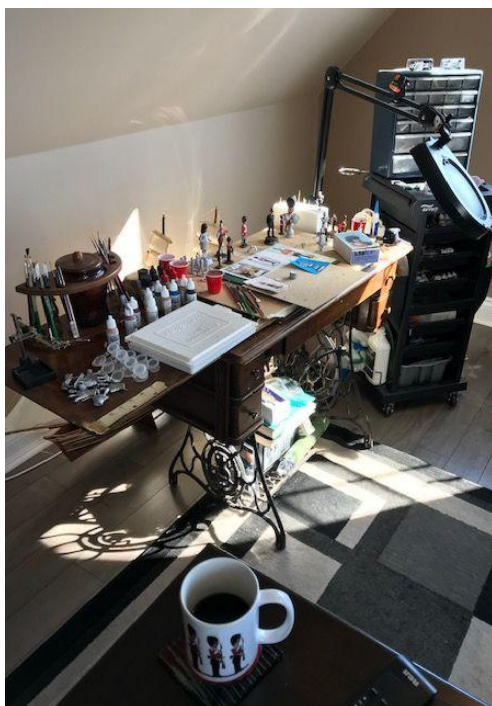
What am I doing? Basically working on some VC figures, going thru all my books and stacks of references thinning them out. Should have a box or two at the next meeting when ever that is. Amazing how much one has stuffed away. Also doing two articles for Stuart - one American VC winners and one on the 3 VC from Winnipeg that lived on the same street. Also working out a diorama for the ranger figures. Never done one so bit of a challenge there. The Journal is coming along great. Hope a few people can send articles, letters to the editor, etc. Lots of pages to fill up. Hopefully the virus will pass by October so I can get to one of the shows. Need a trip really somewhere. Cheers from Oshawa Lockup Camp.

Jim Qualtrough

I have been busy doing a couple of different areas of the toy soldier world at my house. I was able to pick up the remnants of a collection from a family in Markham. Collin Chans family was interested in having it move on to a better place.. I helped them organize the collection of about one thousand soldiers by figuring out the different boxes and makes and names of the mostly Napoleonic figures. We had a plan of setting up a coffee group at their house with some local OMSS members and then I would facilitate the remaining sales as needed. Well of course life in the world changed and I ended up just buying the entire collection off of this amazing family... That kept me busy setting up some new cabinets and displaying many of the very nice new figures. I thank Collin Chans family for their trust in me and faith that their Fathers collection lives on.

I have also spent a lot of time labeling my collection. It sounds so easy until you go shelf to shelf and try and remember the name of the regiment and who painted it or which company made it. I bent a lot of peoples ears trying to identify some of the band and colour party Units I have.. (Thanks Scott Dummitt, Don Ritchie, Guy Elliot)

In the painting side of the hobby, I have been trying to hone my skills in the connoisseur style using acrylics. I have some recently acquired Staddens which I have been painting and repainting and touching up for several months... It's a work in progress but does keep me busy..



In my spare time, I am also a model ship enthusiast and I have been doing some work for the Naval Archive museum in Picton. They have a wonderful collection of models ships there and I am on their volunteer list for cleaning and repair of their historic beauties.

I have attached a couple pictures of my work desk where I have five or six figures in progress and several lined up for repair. Keeping busy in Brighton.



Scott Milburn

There is an old saying that goes 'every cloud has a silver lining', which I find in the current pandemic situation to be quite applicable. Although it is disappointing that we are unable to meet as a group to share stories and discuss our hobby, it has created a good opportunity for many of us to address some of those 'to-do' list items that have been hanging around in the back of our minds for far too long.

I certainly have been keeping busy puttering away and knocking off many things that have been in my job jar for far too long including several tasks I wanted to do regarding our hobby of collecting model soldiers.

Several months ago I purchased additional glass shelves to add to my display cabinet and finally got around to installing them. This of course required careful planning, measuring and drilling so I did not drill through the side of the lovely guardhouse style cabinet John Hambly custom made for me last year. I also got around to replacing the battery type lights in the cabinet with some electric LED lights which really show off the soldiers on the lower shelves. With the successful addition of the new shelves, I was able to unpack a few purchases that I have made over the last few years and finally put them on display. Of course this led to several days of reorganizing the layout in the cabinet in a way that I felt best displayed the soldiers. ... continued next page

... Milburn

I still need to figure out what I can do to display the soldiers I still have packed away; but at least in the current situation I have lots of time to ponder ideas while I work away on the other job jar tasks. Stay safe and we will see each other soon.

Jeff Duncan

With all of us having to spend a lot more time at home I have been working away on some dioramas that I hope to get into our future On Parade show at some point. In addition I have spent some time on-line hunting down some long sought after toy soldier "wants" and "deals". I found several after looking for a couple of decades at shows and on-line.

Peter Cowan's Kingcast Toy Soldiers had a great run and I particularly liked that they created figures for many obscure military historical events. One of these was the Canadian Northwest Rebellion of 1885. This is not a history article so suffice it to say Canada was not all peace and harmony at this time especially in the current day Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Northwest Rebellion was put down and the leader Louis Riel hanged for treason.

Kingcast had a range of sets depicting the Northwest Rebellion including Metis fighters, Chief Poundmaker and Big Bear and their followers, North West Mounted Police troops and the sled gun artillery that was incorporated into several sets. They had a standalone sled gun set with four Canadian Artillery crew members as well as a horse drawn set with six horses at the gallop with a limber and the same set but with the horses at the halt. I had one of these guns for years that I found in Chicago but added the two others over the last 6 weeks. Just like the stock market the prices I found are down even with the dollar exchange and I managed not to sell the house off to pay for them. Looking forward to doing a display with the sled guns.



Well we have gotten off to a great start with these contributions from our members, now its up to you to continue this format (for at least the period of self isolation) and send in your own projects.

The JOURNAL has a new Temporary Editor

Ian Pearson has taken over the JOURNAL until Brendan Hogan returns from his military duties. Ian needs articles submitted to him at: ian.pearson560@gmail.com. Please send your articles in by the end of September as he hopes to have a JOURNAL ready for 15 October this year.

The newsletter is edited by Scott Dummitt.

News items and notices can be submitted to gijoe@kos.net or 705-939-1028

Articles must be submitted no later than 14 days before monthly meetings.

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