

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



Monthly Newsletter for December 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 Saturday June 12, 2021

Monthly Newsletter for December 2020

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 1st vice president

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 2nd vice-president

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Scott Dummitt
 Annual Show
 Chairman

Alex Monsour
 Newsletter Editor

Dave Norman
 Facebook Page
 Manager

Frank MacKay
 Calendar Co-
 ordinator

Jeff Duncan
 Club Table &
 Donations

OMSS Archivist
 Ian Pearson

Next meeting...

CANCELLED - Sunday, 13 December 2020

Branch 643 Royal Canadian Legion 110 Jutland Road Toronto
~~Meeting starts at 1:00 pm. Doors open 11:00 am~~

Letter from the President



We have reached December of this year. And what a year it has been; not what we expected at our meetings in January and February. I hope that all are doing well. It is a long haul. We may get some signs of hope at some (unknown) point in the future, but there are still many dark days ahead.

At this time of year, I was thinking back to 106 years ago. Many young men suited up for what was forecasted to be a short conflict in Europe and home by Christmas. Our situation is different. For one thing, the issue is that we are at home, largely stuck in self-isolation. Somewhat ironic, isn't it? But we are not having to endure the circumstances of a four year war. And then followed by that other pandemic, the Spanish Flu.

In past years December would normally be the time for some of our traditions at the OMSS. It would be my last speech as President, handing out awards and having the Christmas lunch. Despite having missed much this year such as On Parade and the Auction there is one tradition that I don't want to omit. At the Christmas lunch, there is always one table that is vacant, in memory of those members who we lost this past year, and to also remember those from yesteryear. While we can't do this in person this year, I offer the following picture. Please take a moment and remember Les, Brownie and other former members.



Cont'd

President's Message Continued

And while we can't get together for our usual Christmas lunch, a Swiss Chalet meal, and treats donated by members – maybe, around that time, you might think of dining in or getting a takeout from a local restaurant. And while doing so, think of the OMSS and its members – your friends.

My closing comments are about the festive season we are in, and how it will be different from what probably all of us have ever experienced. Even Santa Claus, who has been self-isolating for 365 days (since 2020 is a Leap Year), has had to make some adjustments.



On a personal note, we know the advice from the doctors and government officials. We all have to consider our own circumstances and those of our families and friends. Some will be able get together in person, some virtually, and for some not at all. But for all, including those at the OMSS, we can be together in our thoughts, our hearts and our prayers.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas, Season's Greetings, and a Happy New Year in 2021.

Frank MacKay shares another link on low tech pewter casting to try this winter.

<https://makezine.com/2020/11/23/low-tech-pewter-casting-in-the-kitchen/>

Sadly, the **Annual East Coast Toy Soldier Show** in Hackensack, New Jersey scheduled for November had to be canceled this year due to the pandemic.

Here is some interesting history about Hackensack.

This area was home to the Lenni Lenape, a prosperous Algonquin tribe. They lived along a river they called '*Achinigew-hach*,' or "*Ackingsah-sack*", which translates to '*stony ground*'. The Chief Oratam deeded the local area in what is now Bergen County to the Dutch West India Company. The Dutch named it Hackensack. It was taken by the English in 1667 who kept its name. The area was recaptured by the Dutch but New Netherland was eventually ceded to the English in 1674. The area between the Hudson and the Delaware rivers became known as New Jersey. It became a thriving rural area known for its religious diversity and tolerance. George Washington would headquarter in Hackensack for a period of the Revolutionary War.

As the pandemic continues and the need for masks remains a requirement for indoor public spaces, we have an opportunity to obtain some special ones.

48th Highlanders of Canada Regimental non-medical Masks

Some Regimental Family may have noticed some of the Officers wearing masks with the Davidson Tartan and some with logos on top of the tartan.

The company who made them for the officers have now created an online retail operation so the wider Regimental family can order them.

You can find the entire line up here:

<https://coverups.ca/product-category/military/48th-highlanders>

If you have any trouble with a purchase, tell them Frank Mackay sent you.



The above is brought to you by Jeff Duncan's sense of humour (or lack thereof...)

What's New in the Hobby – December 2020

By Scott Dummitt

This month we have a plethora of figures being introduced. Let's start with John Jenkins Designs new American Revolution British Artillery. The set consists of six figures and cannon, the first two being released in December. They wear the cut back hat and the traditional Royal Artillery blue jacket of the time. JJD has also introduced some new Norman and Saxon warriors to his line-up as well as Spaniards, Aztecs, Civil War troops, German air aces, Romans and Gauls.

Thomas Gunn's latest figures include a new WWII German Light Infantry 7.5 cm artillery piece with a Waffen SS Crewman. Limited to only 100 pieces, this set is only available from retailers as Gunn sold out within 24 hours of announcing the set. My favourite new Gunn set however is the Roman War Dog with Legionnaire. Limited to only 100 (Red Shield) and 50 each of the 9th and 19th Legions this is a highly animated piece.



William Britain Limited has just received in an assortment of long-awaited figures. Their "Native Warrior with Souvenir Grenadier Cap" (16062) makes a great standalone display. Other new figures in stock include a WWII German NCO (25075) who looks a lot like James Coburn's character 'Steiner' in the movie 'Cross of Iron'. There is also a great figure from the US Artillery-1812, A USN Sailor on leave with his Girl, Rosie the Riveter, a female USMC Reservist, "Pappy" Boyington, USN Aviator George Bus, USMC General "Chesty" Puller and some new Vikings and Saxons.

King & Country has introduced several new figures to their Civil War, Ancient Egypt, WWII RAF, Vietnam, WWII Soviet Naval Infantry, WWII Fallschirmjager and Crusader Line-up.



Top Right –
JJD British
Artillery c.
1777

Left: Britain's
Native warrior
set

Right: Thomas
Gunn's Roman
War Dog 19th
Legion

Below: BTSC
1st Cdn Para.
Brigade with
add-on
Regimental Sgt
Major



New from The British Toy Soldier Company, WWII 1st Canadian Parachute Brigade in Garrison dress. BTSC has also brought out the GFGs in winter great coats and have introduced an add-on set of a Sergeant and 7 Guardsmen marching in great coats to the Canadian Guards set.



The Display Case Caper by Alex Monsour

As a newbie in collecting, seven years ago, the need to house and display the soldiers very quickly became evident. Recognising that they would easily become dust magnets, I went looking for a cabinet. The first one turned out to be too dark. The next one was a cherry wood fully mirrored with glass shelves. It looked nice with our dining room furniture. And filled too quickly! Next came a small all glass case. That looked very sharp. Lots of light, but limited space. Then came a tall thin cabinet. The issue with its width made it harder to spread out a battlefield concept but good for smaller themes. So, my Battle of Waterloo now has themed shelves. (Highlanders, English, French, Cavalries etc.).

But I was thrilled to find the following cabinet in an antique store in Cambridge. I photographed it and sent it to my daughter for her opinion. Her response. "The 1970's called and they want their display case back." I chose to ignore her. It was a good price and in really good shape. When I was paying for it, the cashier commented that I was purchasing a wonderful art deco piece there. It's from the 1920's because of the thin legs. The thicker legs became the style in the 1930's. I left the store pleased with myself.

Now my search is on for another similar one. Not one too tall, but wide. There will be a day when we downsize and all of the collection will be consolidated to two larger cabinets. But for now, my search continues. I really like Ikea's Fabrikor with all its glass but the when the doors are closed, 5" of the front display is cut off. Like the fun of hunting for the right soldiers, I continue to monitor online marketplaces for a good used one that will have similar features to the one below and provide more social distancing for my soldiers.



OUR (OMSS Underground Railroad)

The transportation system is alive and well. If you are moving about Ontario and are able to carry model soldiers with you please let Jeff Duncan at heidihoe gardens@rogers.com, Bob Thompson at Thompson_robert@rogers.com or the Newsletter Editor know.

Note this is a delivery service only in lieu of the Canada Post mailing service. There are no financial transactions undertaken by the carriers.

The Last Word of a Civilian Bureaucrat

As a child, September was a long month. School had started, ending the summer fun. My birthday was at the end of the month, so I had to wait. And usually a day or two before it, the Sears Christmas Wishbook arrived. There in the toy section was a medieval castle complete with a contingent of plastic knights. Next to it was a dinosaur set with a mountain. I wanted that castle. I folded the page, told my parents, my friends, wrote to Santa about it and told Santa in the Sears store (right to the source!). Christmas presents were usually clothing from my grandparents, small toys and one big present. And after lying awake most of the night on Christmas Eve, there under the tree was a large box with my name on it. I saved opening it until last and when I picked it up, it sounded like a bunch of plastic pieces. But when I unwrapped the box, it was the dinosaur set with the mountain. I was so disappointed but did show gratitude. And I spent a number of years playing with it.

The following year, the Sears Wishbook arrived again and in it, the same castle. But despite the same rituals as before, it was still not under the tree on Christmas morning. The third year my mother told me in November they had kept trying to get one, but Sears never had any stock. The following year it was no longer in the catalogue. A psychiatrist might say my current addiction to collecting model toy soldiers may be based on that childhood trauma. It does not matter. I do not want to be cured!

A few years ago, my daughter mentioned at some point in the far future, there might be grandchildren visiting. What would I do if one of them played with and damaged some of the model soldiers in the cabinets? My response was there would be one less grandchild. She suggested a less drastic alternative. If I had some cheap plastic ones instead, they could play with those. Last spring, I bought an inexpensive medieval castle complete with soldiers, knights and catapults from ebay to have for such a day. Its not as nice as the one I remember in the Sears catalogue. But this Christmas Day with travel and a live extended family gathering unlikely, I think I will set it up for nostalgia sake and recreate a battle scene.

Whatever form of expression Christmas is for you this year, I hope it is one of peace and enjoyment. Merry Christmas!

The newsletter is edited by Alex Monsour.

News items and notices can be submitted to artmons@rogers.com.

Articles must be submitted no later than 14 days before monthly meetings. Note due to postal costs the Newsletter is limited to 6 pages maximum. Articles that cannot be accommodated will be forwarded to the Journal Editor.

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