



# Newsletter for June 2025

## The Ontario Model Soldier Society

Founded 1962



Brig. Gen. Darrell Dean (Ret'd)  
Honorary President

### 2025 Executive

Duncan Johnstone  
President

David Dorward  
1st Vice-President

Janet MacKay  
2nd Vice-President

Gary Lenius  
Secretary/Treasurer

Andy Traverse  
Past President

Steve Alexander  
Ottawa Chapter Chair

Jim Qualtrough  
Annual Show Chair

Andy Traverse  
Program Chair

VACANT  
Technical Committee Chair

# ON PARADE 2025

presented by the  
Ontario Model Soldier Society

Saturday June 7, 2025

9 am to 3 pm

Admission \$10  
(children under 12 free)

Massed displays of  
Model Soldiers in  
Military Parades,  
Bands and  
Dioramas

Highly detailed  
connoisseur figures

1/6 scale action  
figures

Large vendor area

Show includes our  
open modelling  
competition.



## Canada's Largest Model Soldier Show

Franklin Horner Community Centre  
432 Horner Avenue, Toronto (Etobicoke)  
M8W 2B2

Show details at [www.omss.ca](http://www.omss.ca)  
Show contact: Jim Qualtrough 416-543-0873  
email [omss@bell.net](mailto:omss@bell.net)



Ottawa Chapter  
meeting  
Tuesday June 24th 2025  
@ 7pm

The Barley Mow, 1541 Merivale Road.



OMSS Virtual meeting  
Tuesday June 17th, 2025  
@ 7pm

Virtual meetings are open to all OMSS  
and BMSS members.

BMSS Monthly  
Virtual meeting

Friday June 20th  
@ 7pm GMT

(that's 2pm for most of us in Ontario)

Contact: [Jamesopie@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Jamesopie@yahoo.co.uk)



ITSC Monthly  
Virtual meeting  
Saturday June 14

@7pm GMT

(that's 2pm for most of us in Ontario)

In honour of H.M. the King's official birthday,  
the meeting topic is Ceremonial and Royalty





## President's Message

**Only a few more days until our annual show!** I look forward to seeing all of you there and anticipate with pleasure all the spectacular examples of our art and hobby we will have on display and also in the competition. Not to mention all the cool stuff that I anticipate will be up for sale. We can reasonably hope for a large turnout and that additional interested people will be inspired to join us. After all, it is no more obsessive-compulsive than model railroading, or model airplanes (possibly even less). At least for my part soon my teeth-grinding over the minutest of details in my competition entries will end, temporarily.

We also look forward to the attendance of our guests, especially Ken and Nancy Osen of W. Britains who will no doubt have a wonderful display and presentation, and we look forward to giving them a warm OMSS welcome. Their continued support is most appreciated, and we should reciprocate.

It looks as though the Anniversary Book will be available by show time. Congratulations and thanks to all those people whose hard work made the production of this fabulous history of our first 50 years possible. It will no doubt be a monument to and a memory of all those who are no longer with us. Special thanks to Mr. Pearson and Mr. Dorward who have made this possible.

Duncan Johnstone, President

## On Parade Saturday June 7th update— *Jim Qualtrough On Parade chair*

The big day is fast approaching, and we are all excited for the 2<sup>nd</sup> show at our new show venue.

The **Franklin Horner Community Centre is at 432 Horner Avenue** in Toronto. It is easy access from the southbound 427 onto the Browns line exit. Go straight south to Horner Avenue. Turn left and the Community Centre is a short distance east. If you are staying at the Stay Inn in Etobicoke, then it is a short five-minute drive to the venue.



We will need volunteer help on both days. Starting with **set up on Friday June 6th at 3pm**. For the first few minutes we will need to place tables into each of the gymnasium size rooms. I will have diagrams of the floor plan available. Once the tables are set up, we can then start moving in vendors tables with everyone's help we shouldn't get log jammed at the loading dock. The loading doors go directly into our vendor room so it will be quite handy. The parking lot is right at the loading dock so let's work together on a safe and efficient process.

We have access to these rooms for set up of your vending tables and competition/display items **until 6pm Friday**. At that time, we need to vacate the premises and check into hotels as well as try to find a nice place to gather and eat for some camaraderie.

**Saturday morning, June 7th, starts early at 7am for set up** of any other vendors and anyone bringing displays and competition pieces. Again, an orderly loading from the parking lot doors is expected. The venue has a cafeteria that will open around 10ish. Bring your own coffee and a bagel to tie you over until then.

**Doors open at 9am.** All members of the public will be entering through one door towards our admissions table where they can pay their \$10.00 and hopefully grab a pamphlet regarding membership into our club. Our painting table will be in full operation in the competition / display room as well as a wargaming display.

W. Britains will be setup in the cafeteria side-room and have another dedicated classroom where they will put on a 45-minute workshop in the morning and afternoon (10:30 and again at 1pm)

Judging will be carried out throughout the day and please participate by bringing your finest work. **Competition pieces must be registered and setup up by noon.** No late entries will be accepted. Awards and presentations will begin around 2:30. The show ends at 3pm at which time volunteers are desperately needed to assist vendors break down the tables and load their cars back up.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone and let's have the best show ever.



## East Meets West

Text and Photos: Stuart A. Hessney

My wife Sally was looking forward to her first vacation since starting a new job, so we decided to do something extra special by traveling west from our U.S. home in Upstate New York to spend a week in Canada's British Columbia during mid-May.

My lovely wife's objectives were to explore the Vancouver and Victoria areas – especially to visit as many botanical gardens as possible and go on a whale watch. That mission was accomplished with our highlights including a tour of the breathtaking Butchart Gardens and a rare sighting of a grey whale during our stay in the provincial capital on Vancouver Island.

My goals included exploring the Miniature World museum's dioramas in Victoria and spending the last two days of our trip back on the mainland in Surrey at the home of my good friend and fellow collector Darrell Dean and his wonderful wife Heather.



**OMSS Honorary President Darrell Dean and Stuart**

As a young lad, Darrell was underage but so tall that he passed muster as an Irish Fusiliers of Canada cadet to begin his military career. The retired brigadier general's decades of dedicated service included commanding both the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) and Royal Canadian Dragoon Regiments, and serving as colonel commandant of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps. His many honours and accomplishments as a soldier and a civilian have included serving as the honorary president of Canada's Ontario Model Soldier Society.

Darrell and I first met by chance at the Texas Toy Soldier Show in San Antonio years ago and we became fast friends. I love listening to the great storyteller recount his experiences including meeting many prominent people.



**German composition figures depicting British soldiers**



Heather gets all the credit for designing the wonderful upstairs room in their home devoted to his collection of toy soldiers, militaria, books and related memorabilia. Darrell's wide-ranging collecting interests include old Britains toy soldiers, the French Foreign Legion, German composition figures, the Spanish Civil War, the Anglo-Zulu War, the Mahdist War, World War II and more.

As much as I enjoyed seeing Darrell's collection with my own eyes, the best part of my visit was simply being able to spend some quality time with him and Heather while Sally and I travelled from the east to meet up with our friends way out west.

*Thanks to Stuart Hessney for sharing this story. Stuart is editor of **Toy Soldier Collector & Historical Figures Magazine** in addition to being a long time OMSS member and supporter.*



## Toronto Chapter's May Meeting Report



Colditz Castle/Prison/Museum

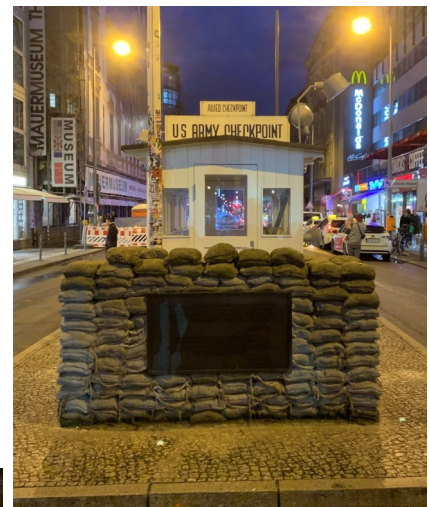
In addition to our pre-meeting vendor sales, executive committee updates and interesting show and tell **Andy Traverse** shared with us photos of his recent tour of sites from “The Air War in Europe”, which included visits to Dam Buster sites, the Luft Stalag III (site of the Great Escape), Colditz Castle a WWII prison, Dresden, Berlin, the Rheinberg Forest War Cemetery and more.



Andy on Napoleon's spot outside Dresden Cathedral



Edersee Dam, one of the dams destroyed by the Dam Busters (since rebuilt)



Checkpoint “Charlie” which separated East and West Berlin



Of course, no trip would be complete without seeing some Toy Soldiers!

Rheinberg Forest War Cemetery





## Ottawa Chapter's May Meeting

*Unfortunately because of the early publication of June's newsletter, we don't have a report from May's meeting. But below are some additional photo's from April's meeting.*



Dennis D's Naval Brigade of East India



Doug C's Mountie and Naval Stretcher



Dennis D's Hockes Naval Band with an extra mem-



Michael C's Robin Hood Set



## ITSC May Meeting Report

The ITSC held its May call, with the usual banter and conversation. This month's call was a little different being the first themed call looking at war films.

Though in true ITSC style the theme stretched from Ben Hur to the Wild West and A Bridge To Far. However nobody showcased Zulu which was a surprise!

Ian continued his archeological dig of under the bed boxes with another selection of figures both metal and plastic. We were also joined by Johnathan Newman from the US who showed an amazing selection of paper soldiers.

The next call will be on 14th June 7pm (GMT +1). In honour of H.M the King's official birthday, the call will rightly have a Ceremonial and Royalty Theme! So get the boots polished, belts whitened and Full Dress troops on parade.

## Preparing Competition Entries for the 2025 *On Parade* Show



**Keith C. Ritchie, Head Judge**

Other than the following, we are retaining the judging format and process from last year:

**All entries for competition must be set up for judging by 12 p.m. noon.** It is a busy time for the panel of judges to get all entries judged and then compile the results to calculate scores and awards. To give the judges time, all entries for competition must be fully set up and with the necessary documentation by 12 noon. Entries not ready for judging by noon will **not** be judged for the competition.

**The judges will be mindful of the OMSS' purpose, particularly as set out in Article 1 a. of the club's Constitution:**

### Article 1 – Purpose

The Ontario Model Soldier Society (herein after called the Society) is a provincially chartered, Not-For-Profit organization dedicated to the following purposes:

Providing a meeting place and a means of exchange of information among those interested in *creating, painting, wargaming, collecting and displaying model and toy soldiers and similar miniature figures, and the history thereof*; **[Emphasis added]**

This is not a material change and something the judges will assess in grading an entry overall. It is not a change in how judges have carried out their judging duties. It is, however, a reminder of what is unique to the OMSS compared to other IPMS-related shows like HeritageCon and TorCan, including why we have different competition categories. This is not restrictive, as there is a wide field for what would fall under “creating, painting, wargaming, collecting and displaying model and toy soldiers and similar miniature figures, and the history thereof”. But we are also challenged how to categorize some entries that are more related to IPMS clubs.

The judging criteria and entry forms are unchanged from last year. Entrants may wish to consult articles I wrote for the electronic version of the newsletters for February, March and April of 2024 on the categories, the judges' role and guidelines, and other tips. The following summary may be helpful:

**Fill out the Entry Sheet as completely as possible.** Entries for Display Only should be clearly marked. Also provide as much information as is necessary. The judges will not have time to chase anyone around; we will assess as best we can. It can be helpful to provide additional documentation (prepared separately), but this should not be voluminous, as the judges won't have time to read it all. While entry forms will be available at the show, entrants may wish to download the form and fill it out prior to the show.

**An important piece of information is whether the figures are done (assembled, converted, painted) by the entrant or are commercial (i.e., from a manufacturer).** Be truthful here. Also note that figures or other pieces of a display that are made by someone other than the entrant should be considered as “commercial”. It is recognized that entries may contain figures, other equipment and materials both made by the entrant and also commercial. The judges will assess the magnitude and also the importance of figures and other display elements in judging whether the entry should be judged as “connoisseur” or commercial.

**Be respectful of display space.** We had adequate space, and we hope for more entries. We also are allowing for more display space from what was possible in a smaller venue like the Jutland Legion. Be courteous to allow other entrants enough space to display their entries, whether for competition or otherwise. Also provide space for visitors to see displays (and to allow the judges to also view all entries).

**Further information on Competition entries at the annual show is available on the OMSS' website:** [WWW.OMSS.CA/pages/annual\\_show.html](http://WWW.OMSS.CA/pages/annual_show.html)

We, the judges, along with the OMSS and the visitors to the show look forward to seeing your creative, inspiring, well-thought out, and well-documented displays and competition entries at the **On Parade show on June 7**. Good luck to all!





Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britains>

## A brief history of W. Britain Model Figures



The "W. Britain" brand name of toy and collectable soldiers is derived from a company founded by William Britain Jr., a British toy manufacturer, who in 1893 invented the process of hollow casting in lead, and revolutionized the production of toy soldiers. The company quickly became the industry leader, and was imitated by many other companies. The style and scale of Britain's figures became the industry standard for toy soldiers for many years.

In 1907 the family proprietorship, William Britain & Sons, incorporated as "Britains, Ltd". The Britain family controlled the firm until 1984 when it was sold to Dobson Park Industries. They combined the operations with an existing line of toys and renamed the company Britains Petite, Ltd. During the first half of the 20th century, Britains expanded its range and market. By 1931 the firm employed 450 at its London factory. The catalogue had expanded to 435 sets and twenty million models a year were being produced.

In the early 1950s Britains was associated with W. Horton Toys and Games which made the die-cast Lilliput ranges of small-scale cars, trucks and other vehicles. In 1959, Britains acquired Herald Miniatures which produced plastic figures.

In the 1950s, besides soldiers, a variety of vehicles began to appear, mostly in the military field. One such detailed die-cast vehicle was a Royal Artillery 4.5" howitzer towable cannon that fired toy shells. For a toy, it was intricately designed, with a special threaded post with rotating knob to raise and lower the cannon. Also in early 1950s, one of the first Britains vehicles was a Bluebird land speed record car of famed driver Malcolm Campbell. It had a removable body and the box showed a detailed cut-away illustration of the car. Land Rovers, and later Range Rovers and various commercial lorries, such as a milk tanker, flat bed, tipper, cement mixer, also appeared.

In 1966 safety regulations in the United Kingdom combined with rising costs halted the production of lead toy soldiers. Britains shifted most production of Herald plastic to Hong Kong from 1966. In 1971 Britains started Deetail plastic figures with metal bases that were initially manufactured in England but later outsourced to China.

When production stopped, the range of catalogued lead sets exceeded 2200. In 1973 Britains introduced New Metal models, which are die cast in a durable alloy. Initially these sets were aimed at the British souvenir market. In 1983 Britains responded to a growing collectors' market by introducing additional models and limited-edition sets. This range was greatly expanded over the next 20 years and included die-cast versions of their old toy soldiers, some made from original moulds. These, as well as the lines of Britains Deetail plastic figures and accessories, and their older sets have become highly collectable.

### **Britains in the 21st Century**

In 1997, Britains Petite, Ltd was bought by Ertl Company of Iowa, a maker of die-cast toys. Ertl was subsequently bought by RC2 LLC, another American die-cast miniature and plastic kit maker. At this time, production of toy soldiers was moved to China. In 2011, Japanese-headquartered toy company Tomy acquired RC2 which included the Britains die-cast farm miniatures range.

### **W. Britains in the 21st Century**

In 2005, the W. Britains brand was acquired by First Gear, an American maker of die-cast collectibles. This firm produces and sells mostly contemporary matte-style figures to the collectors market under the W. Britain brand. Kenneth A. Osen was the master sculptor for W. Britain until June 2013 when he was appointed General Manager & Creative Director. Sculpting continues to be done by Ken Osen, Alan Ball and Graham Scollick. All figures are sculpted by hand, to scale, before duplication. First Gear sold W. Britain to The Good Soldier, LLC in 2016. In May of 2020 W. Britain was sold to On The Mantle, LLC of Chillicothe, Ohio. They retained all employees and moved all operations to Chillicothe. On 30 January 2012 Bachmann Europe Plc became the sole distributor of all W. Britain figures in the UK and Continental Europe until 2023 when all distribution reverted back to the world headquarters in Chillicothe, Ohio, USA.



**Did you know?** W. Britain produced a limited edition figure exclusively for the OMSS?



## BRITAINS 10073 - GENERAL ARTHUR CURRIE

Canadian Lt . General Sir Arthur Currie, 1918 – Currie was the first Canadian to command the Canadian Corps during the war. This figure is a limited edition of 250 figures created exclusively for the Ontario Model Soldier Society (OMSS)

Visit: <https://www.wbritain.com/product-store/10073---general-arthur-currie-1918>

This very limited edition figure is still available through the OMSS or Scott Dummitt Presents at <https://www.gijoeCanada.com/>

W. Britain's also produces a series of detailed RCMP figures amongst other Canadian figures.



10101—RCMP Male Trooper



10174—RCMP Mounted Trooper



10102—RCMP Female Trooper

Thanks to Doug Cope for contributing to the following;



## History Works/Del Prado

Del Prado was a manufacturer of hand-painted 7cm (2 3/4" ) die cast metal figures for the budget conscious collector issued with booklets by Osprey Publishing detailing each figure.

History Works, formerly known as Del Prado is owned and operated by Richard Walker, the former general manager of Britain's offering beautifully sculpted and excellently painted metal figures at reasonable prices. , which pioneered budget-conscious soldiers for novice as well as experienced collectors. History Works' many ranges cover a wide variety of historical periods, most collectors will be able to find something to suit their taste.

Del Prado's Napoleon





## The Quartermaster's Store



### Frank Barrett Collection for sale



Frank Barrett is looking to relocate his beloved toy soldiers to a new home to be enjoyed by others.

His collection includes Bastion, Britains (ancients, modern, limited editions, and plastic "eyes right"), CBG Mignot (Napoleonic), Ducal, Marlborough/Blenheim, Nostalgia, Soldiers' Soldiers, Steadfast and Tradition. Many are still in their original boxes.

One of his prized possessions is the Marlborough Delhi Durbar series. He has the entire procession of elephants, handlers, regiments, and accessories.

Frank also has a collection of military bands (foot and mounted) casted by Toronto's Gord Dumbleton, that Frank counted as some of his favourite figures.



Our aim is to sell to likeminded collectors either in entirety or by maker brand.

Please reach out Frank's son Grant at;  
**Grantbarrett3@hotmail.com**



### Scott Dummitt Presents— Open House June 8



Over the years, many members who travel from the east for 'On Parade' have commented that they would like the opportunity to drop by Scott's to see his collection and peruse his store on their way home. We will be offering store only discounts on most products that day as well.

So for those that wish to take a break from their journey, Scott is hosting an open house from **noon until 5pm on Sunday June 8**. Scott is a short 15 minute drive north of the 401.



Take exit 464 off the 401 and head north on County Road 28 to **1754 Carmel Line** in the small hamlet of Baillieboro. We hope many members take the opportunity to drop by for a chat, a cold drink and a sandwich.



the last word

*"What you get from life will be direct proportion to what you give to life."*

Gail Lynne Goodwin (author)

The newsletter is edited by Scott Milburn.

News items, notices and upcoming events can be submitted to [scottm33@live.ca](mailto:scottm33@live.ca).