



THE BLAST TUNNEL

DIEFENBUNKER ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Edition 3

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Disclaimer: This Newsletter is produced for members of the Diefenbunker Alumni Association and is not an official publication of the Diefenbunker Cold War Museum nor of the Department of National Defence. It is produced solely to provide relevant items of interest to Alumni members.

Editor's Corner

With our fourth reunion approaching fast, I thought it appropriate to put out another edition of the newsletter with a reunion update and a variety of other bits and pieces that have arisen since the last edition.

We'll start off with a biography of a Diefenbunker founding member, Don Dutton. The latest news on the reunion will follow with various other membership snippets.

A regular feature will be a summary of upcoming events at the Museum which, as you will note, continues to grow in both attendance and activity level.

We'll then conclude with a bit more history of the Diefenbunker in its Central Emergency Government Headquarters guise.

I hope that you are not going to let this become a personal sounding board for myself and that you will provide inputs of interest to yourselves—updates and anecdotes on your time in the bunker and your life today; or any other Cold War or Bunker tales that you would like to share.

MWO (Ret'd) Donald Dutton

Born 20 Aug 1926, at Campbellford, Ont. The youngest of 7 children. At age 13 I first started work on the tiny ships called corvettes at Kingston, Ont. I had plans of joining the Navy on reaching age 18. The corvette building program was halted and the Navy was not accepting applicants at that time so I joined the artillery on 30 Oct 1944 and found myself off to Petawawa for basic training followed by Artillery Field Craft training. I was sent on an Artillery Sigs course from 19 Apr to 16 Aug 1945.

Shortly after this WW II ended and I was released. Unemployment offices were much different during this period. When I went down to the office they sent me off to Massey Ferguson - farm equipment manufacturing- in Brantford, Ont.

On 18 Jun 1948 I married Irene Morton. We had a very good life together and raised two fine children Tommy and Cindy. Sadly, after 61 years of marriage, Irene died on 24 Nov 2009.

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Circa 1979



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Don Dutton (Continued)

In 1948 the Soviet Union was starting to cause alarm. NATO was formed and Canada, as part of the Alliance, was concerned. I decided to leave Massey Ferguson and re-enlist and did so on 26 Oct 1949, in Kingston, Ont.

After the earlier training with Sigs Artillery I now decided Sigs was the best place for me. I went on Tel Tech courses shortly after and got posted to the Primary Tape\Relay Centre in Toronto. I was promoted to Cpl in May 1952. From there I was posted to Ottawa CC Sigs Regt, which was later downgraded to a Sqn. During this time, while moving from Toronto I reverted to Cpl from L/Sgt. Later I was an A/Sgt and finally I was promoted to Sgt with 1 Army Sig Sqn.

Now the big change started in both military communications and my military life. In 1959 plans were completed and construction of the future CFS Carp was underway. I was placed in charge of a Tel Tech team responsible for receiving and overhauling Message Centre and Tape Relay Centre equipment collected from all available sources across the country. Towards the end of 1961, I, with some of my team was working regularly out of Carp. We were moving the equipment in and wiring in the communications areas, Comm. Centre, Crypto, Temporary Major Tape Relay centre (on 3rd floor) and the Tel Tech workshop.

On 4 Jan 1962, Carp (1 Army Sig Sqn) went operational and 4 of us candidates headed off to England for STRAD training from Jan to Apr 1962. On returning my new job was in charge of the military STRAD installation, wiring and modification team. Thousands of modifications were being received. In Oct 1962 we had our first full scale lock down due to the Cuban Missile Crisis.

We had a top notch team of English engineers who carried out tests and figured out modifications to overcome them. Nigel Brook stands out as the best of the best. We went operational in Jun 1964. Of the 5 sites being built around the world we were the first by at least a year in going operational.

When we went operational in 1964 the engineers stayed for a short period but Nigel Brook signed on to stay behind as the resident engineer for a few years. There were three of us left from our course in England, John Robertson, Bob Trottier and myself, one of each Tech trade. We took over as Senior Maintainers rotating being on call every third week. Our staff of Junior Maintainers consisted of 4 Cpl Rad Techs and one Tel Op Sigm. The first several years were extremely hectic as we continued to work out bugs. The life of on-call duty was most hectic and busy after normal hours. We sadly lost one of our on-call persons and then Nigel Brook moved on. John Robertson and I started a training program to get more incoming staff trained to the Senior Maintainer level. Slowly we lost some of our original Junior Maintainers and training new ones took up much time. I was promoted to S/Sgt in 1967.

During this time my home life was also very busy as I was building a new house in a rural area outside of Carleton Place. When our family could finally move to the area from Stittsville I had a telephone problem. This was in the days before cell phones and pagers. I had to have a telephone and I had to have a private line vice party line. Bell Canada did not see it my way as I was 1.1 mile in from the nearest main road. My problem was sent to HQ and someone with some power had Bell quickly come around and install my telephone!

Shortly after this I was the only one left of the original England trained team and all the original Junior Maintainers had departed. I was promoted to MWO in 1971.

Don Dutton (concluded)

John Robertson returned as a CWO. We requested a return of some of our original Junior Maintainers so we could run a course and train them as Senior Maintainers. Don Medcraft and Paul Vaillancourt were selected and we received two more with Garry Vanstone and Gord Leroux.

John Robertson and I rotated teaching duties. The new Senior Maintainers rotated on call duties but also when they did their week of on call they worked evening shift along with the Junior Maintainer. Times were improving and Robertson and I were not in such great demand on back-up duties.

In 1978 the instructors were myself, Medcraft and Vaillancourt. We ran our last Senior Maintainers Course with Sgt Bob McAra, Cpl Dave Chaplin and Brian Holden.



Today

I retired at age limit in 1979 and left the STRAD section in good hands.

I went to work for Bruce Instruments, in Almonte, making prototypes of TV remote controls. My job was primarily in repairs, modifications and upgrades. We worked on game consoles as well.

The company amalgamated with three other companies and became International Data Castings (IDC). We were heavily into working on getting an internet up and running. I retired from IDC before any final results came into being.

- During my career I was awarded the following medals and decorations:
- King George VI Medal (1945)
 - Voluntary Service Medal (1945)
 - Queen's Jubilee Medal 1978
 - Canadian Confederation Medal
 - Canadian Forces Decoration (CD)

During most of the 70's I was very active in Carleton Place. I ran the Church/school Bingo for almost 10 years finishing in 1979. I also was involved with the Sea Cadets Navy League for several years. This involved fund raising and driving Cadets from Carleton Place to training and events which were held in Almonte.

In Memoriam

- The following are a couple of other names to add to the list of former Diefenbunker colleagues who have passed away.
- Sgt Clay Vaillancourt (Terminal Equipment Technician) d. March 2010
 - MWO Gerry Hatton (Terminal Equipment/Communications Tech) d. Dec 2001



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Reunion Update

The 4th Reunion of the Diefenbunker Alumni Association will be held Saturday, 23 April from 1800-2100 in the Main Cafeteria of the Diefenbunker. To date (24 Feb), 60 Alumni have responded to the invitation and 49 have indicated that they will attend, which, including spouses and families, adds up to 75 confirmed attendees so far. I hope to hear from more of you in the very near future.

The cost, still to be confirmed, will be \$15-\$20 per person, with beer and wine on sale at \$5 each. A Sandwich buffet will be included in the price of admission.

I would like to do a roll-call of Alumni attendees early in the evening to allow everyone to get to know each other a bit better. There will be a slide show running continually depicting people and facilities associated with the Diefenbunker. If you have any that you would like to add, please don't hesitate to send them to me. The Museum is also working on putting together a collection of artifacts from the Bunker's operational days that you might find interesting. They will also have the CANEX set up in its 1977 lay-out that may bring back some memories. I also hope that some of you will come prepared to share an anecdote or two about your time in the Bunker.

In addition, Art Barr has arranged to have the former All Ranks Mess (now a local Social Club) opened for an hour before the reunion. To confirm this function, Art needs to have sufficient numbers to justify its opening. Those interested are **urgently** requested to inform Art at the _barrs@rogers.com as soon as possible.

Look forward to meeting you all and enjoying some remembrances of days gone by.

1976 CFS Carp Softball Team— Any familiar faces?





Upcoming At the Museum by Megan Lafreniere

The following are a few of the things in the works at the Diefenbunker Museum

Annual Easter Egg Hunt | March 26

The Easter Bunny is at it again, on his fifth visit to the Diefenbunker! With hundreds of places to hide in our 100,000 square foot bunker, we need help to find all of the eggs left behind by the Easter Bunny. Come join the hunt and make an Easter craft! Nut-free. Included in the cost of admission. First come, first serve.

Canex exhibition opening | April 23

The Canadian Forces Station Carp Canex brought to life circa 1977.

'A Select Few' exhibition opening | April 23

Highlights from the Diefenbunker collection, selected by Museum staff, Board Directors and volunteers on the occasion of the 4th Annual Reunion of the Diefenbunker Alumni Association.

Mother's Day | May 8

Celebrate Mom while touring our amazing underground facility! A special Women's History Tour will be offered with a special admission price for moms.

Doors Open Ottawa | June 4-5

Join the throngs at the Bunker for Doors Open! Free tours in French and English by reservation only. Food and Cold War Store merchandise for sale (cash only).

Canada Day | July 1

Celebrate Canada's birthday at the Diefenbunker with free guided tours, children's activities, live entertainment and more!

Donations to the food bank will be accepted.

Summer Spy Camp | July 4-September 2

Children ages 7 to 12 go undercover at the Diefenbunker and return home having mastered the skills of a real secret agent! Spy Campers learn the art of espionage, develop disguises for cover, make and break codes, create and use spy gadgets, go on scavenger hunts, and take part in many more fun activities.

Your child will get a taste of what it's like to be a spy, and will graduate as a Level One Spy upon completion!

Each week has a different theme, so don't hesitate to sign up for more than one!

Visit <http://www.diefenbunker.ca/> for full event details.



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Does Anyone Remember?

This photo, originally from the Canadian Forces Archives, was taken during a March 1976 helicopter visit to CFS Carp by Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, Chief of Defence Staff LGen Jacques Dextraze and Minister of National Defence Barney Danson. At that time the bunker and its real primary function as the emergency nuclear war location of essential federal government personages was 'hush hush'. Not long after this visit PM Trudeau announced the existence of the facility and its' purpose to the House of Commons.



Trudeau was the only PM to visit the facility....that we know of! There have been rumors that at one time during its' construction Prime Minister Diefenbaker paid a surprise, incognito visit but to date no substantive evidence has been found to back this up. Given the character of the man, it is a dubious story.

Does anybody in the Alumni Association have any further recollection of Trudeau's visit or information about the mysterious Diefenbaker visit?

New Members

Since the last edition, the following have joined the Association (Bunker dates in brackets where known):

- Rock Bonsant (1991-93)
- Eric Bowie-Reed
- Lionel Casey (1980-86) SWO 1984-86
- Frank Wolk (1961-63)