

Honorary Patron of EUSI – Her Honor, Lois Mitchell, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta



EDMONTON UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE

**PRESIDENT'S ENEWS**

**DECEMBER 2016**

The information in this newsletter is for informational purposes only. The Edmonton United Services Institute assumes no liability for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon.

### **President's Christmas Greeting**

Friends and supporters of the EUSI, I hope you all have had a great 2016 and in good health. We have been blessed with great weather in November and outdoor Remembrance Day services were exceptionally warm. On behalf of EUSI, members laid wreath at the Butterdome, West Edmonton Mall, Aviation Museum, and at Edmonton City Hall. A Remembrance Day Levee co-hosted by EUSI and HMC NONSUCH were attended by more than 250 people. Dignitaries who attended include Member of Parliament, Ziad Aboultaif, Member of Alberta Legislature Nicole Goehring. Special guest was Commodore Craig Donovan, who made a special trip from Ottawa for the sole purpose of representing the Royal Canadian Navy in the Remembrance Day service. The latest government policy regarding the Royal Canadian Navy wants more community involvement and positive exposure. The EUSI will definitely support this policy. In the coming year, EUSI is looking at co-hosting a businessmen's lunch monthly at HMC NONSUCH. We are actively checking out different catering services in the city. In order not to compete with other organizations for the Canada 150 celebration in 2017, EUSI is planning to suspend the annual symposium for 2017. Instead, EUSI will host a Celebratory dinner to commemorate contributions made by the military that made Canada the great nation it is today. The theme is to be celebratory and light humored. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please forward them to the Major(ret'd) Alex Tsang. We hope the Commander of the Army will accept an invitation to be our feature speaker.

On November 13, the EUSI held an official church parade at the All Saints Anglican Cathedral and Reverend Sarah Holmstrom was officially welcomed into the EUSI family as the Unit Padre. She was presented with the EUSI stole which was consecrated by the Very Reverend Neil Gordon. Thank you to all EUSI members who attended this ceremony and a very big thank you to 2Lt (ret') Gordon Smith who made all the planning and coordination for the event.

I stopped skiing many years ago after being rammed by a young and fearless teenage at the ski hill in Jasper. So, for all you skiers, may you never see a flick of snow till after Christmas. And as politically incorrect as I am, I am not afraid to use the word Christmas and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. For our brothers and sister of the Canadian Forces who are away from home and cannot be with their family during this time of year, I thank you for your sacrifices and May God watch over you.

**Please drink responsibly and do not drink excessively and then drive.**



### **Military Humor,**

On some air bases the Air Force is on one side of the field and civilian aircraft use the other side of the field, with the control tower in the middle. One day the tower received a call from an aircraft asking, "What time is it?" The tower responded, "Who is calling?" The aircraft replied, "What difference does it make?" The tower replied "It makes a lot of difference. If it is an American Airlines Flight, it is 3 o'clock. If it is an Air Force, it is 1500 hours. If it is a Navy aircraft, it is 6 bells. If it is an Army aircraft, the big hand is on the 12 and the little hand is on the 3. If it is a Marine Corps aircraft, it's Thursday afternoon."

During an Army war game a commanding officer's jeep got stuck in the mud. The C.O. saw some men lounging around nearby and asked them to help him get unstuck.

"Sorry sir," said one of the loafers, "but we've been classified dead and the umpire said we couldn't contribute in any way." The C.O. turned to his driver and said, "Go drag a couple of those dead bodies over here and throw them under the wheels to give us some traction."

(Editor's note: Usually, the joke is on the officers. Since this is the Xmas edition, we will be nice to the officers for a change)



### **MILITARY READING - Gallows humor**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Gallows humor** is humor about very unpleasant, serious, or painful circumstances. Any humor that treats serious matters, such as [death](#), [war](#), [disease](#), and [crime](#), in a light, silly or satirical fashion is considered gallows humor. Gallows humor has been described as a witticism in response to a hopeless situation. It arises from stressful, traumatic, or life-threatening situations, often in circumstances such that [death](#) is perceived as impending and unavoidable.

[Sigmund Freud](#) in his 1927 essay *Humour (Der Humor)* puts forth the following theory of the gallows humor: "The ego refuses to be distressed by the provocations of reality, to let itself be compelled to suffer. It insists

that it cannot be affected by the traumas of the external world; it shows, in fact, that such traumas are no more than occasions for it to gain pleasure." Some other sociologists elaborated this concept further. At the same time, [Paul Lewis](#) warns that this "relieving" aspect of gallows jokes depends on the context of the joke: whether the joke is being told by the threatened person themselves or by someone else.

Gallows humor has the social effect of strengthening the morale of the oppressed and undermines the morale of the oppressors. According to [Wylie Sypher](#), "to be able to laugh at evil and error means we have surmounted them.

Gallows humor is a natural human instinct and examples of it can be found in stories from antiquity. Its use was widespread in [middle Europe](#), from where it was imported to the [United States](#) as part of [Jewish humor](#). It is rendered with the German expression *Galgenhumor*. The concept of gallows humor is comparable to the French expression *rire jaune*, which also has a [Germanic](#) equivalent in the [Belgian Dutch](#) expression *groen lachen* (lit. *green laughing*).

**Italian comedian [Daniele Luttazzi](#) discussed gallows humour focusing on the particular type of laughter that it arouses (*risata verde* or *groen lachen*), and said that [grotesque satire](#), as opposed to [ironic satire](#), is the one that most often arouses this kind of laughter.**

---

There are multiple recorded instances of humorous [last words](#) and [final statements](#). For example, author and playwright [Oscar Wilde](#) was destitute and living in a cheap [boarding house](#) when he found himself on his deathbed. There are variations on what his exact words were, but his reputed [last words](#) were, "Either that wallpaper goes or I do.

Examples of [gallows speeches](#) include:

One of the first [convicts transported in Australia by the British Empire](#), nicknamed after the pirate [Black Caesar](#), escaped the penal colony in 1789 and lived as a [bushranger](#) in the wilderness. He survived by raiding garden patches with a stolen gun. When he was eventually caught, according to colonial governor [David Collins](#) he was "so indifferent about meeting death, that he declared in confinement that if he should be hanged he would create a laugh before he was turned off, by playing some trick upon the executioner."<sup>[18]</sup>

Murderer [James French](#) has been attributed with famous last words before his death by electric chair: "How's this for a headline? [French Fries](#)."

As [Sir Thomas More](#) climbed a rickety scaffold where he would be executed, he said to his executioner: "I pray you, Mr. Lieutenant, see me safe up; and for my coming down, let me shift for myself."<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

At his public execution, the murderer [William Palmer](#) is said to have looked at the trapdoor on the gallows and asked the hangman, "Are you sure it's safe?"<sup>[19]</sup>

[Sir Walter Raleigh](#) was beheaded in the Old Palace Yard at the Palace of Westminster on 29 October 1618. "Let us dispatch", he said to his executioner. "At this hour my ague comes upon me. I would not have my enemies think I quaked from fear." After he was allowed to see the axe that would behead him, he mused: "This is a sharp Medicine, but it is a Physician for all diseases and miseries." According to many biographers – Raleigh Trevelyan in his book *Sir Walter Raleigh* (2002) for instance – Sir Walter's final words (as he lay ready for the axe to fall) were: "Strike, man, strike!"<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

[Ronald Reagan](#), upon being transported to the emergency room after being shot by [John Hinckley, Jr.](#), is reported to have said to his doctors, "I hope you're all [Republicans](#)."<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

[Military life](#) is full of gallows humor, as those in the services continuously live in the danger of being killed, especially in wartime. For example:

The Japanese Navy [Mitsubishi G4M](#) Isshikirikkou (イッシキリッコウ) "Betty" bomber airplane was called "Hamaki" (葉巻 or はまき, meaning [cigar](#)) by the Japanese crews not only because its fuselage was cigar-shaped, but because it had a tendency to ignite on fire and burn violently when it was hit. The American nickname was "flying [Zippo](#)".

When the survivors of [HMS Sheffield](#), sunk in 1982 in the [Falklands War](#), were awaiting rescue, they were reported to have sung the [Monty Python](#) song, "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life". <sup>[[citation needed](#)]</sup>

Soviet pilots in World War II joked that the true meaning of the type designation of the [LaGG-3](#) was *Lakirovanny Garantirovanny Grob*, "varnished guaranteed coffin".

Overnight, in the [Battle of Jutland](#) (31 May – 1 June 1916), the destroyer [HMS Tipperary](#) was sunk; only 13 survived out of a crew of 197, in her engagement with heavily armed German dreadnought [SMS Westfalen](#). The survivors were identified in the gloom by Royal Navy rescuers because they were heard in the distance, singing, "It's a long way to Tipperary". Their rescuers said, "We knew it was you". <sup>[[citation needed](#)]</sup>

During the [Winter War](#) the Soviet Union bombed Helsinki, and after Soviets claimed they were air-dropping food to the "starving people of Helsinki" the Finnish people dubbed the Soviet bombs "[Molotov bread baskets](#)", and in return called their firebombs [Molotov cocktails](#), as "a drink to go with the food."

During [World War II](#), the Soviet soldiers dubbed the [45 mm anti-tank gun M1937 \(53-K\)](#) "Good bye, Motherland!", as its penetration was proving to be inadequate for the task of destroying German tanks, meaning a crew operating one was practically defenseless against the enemy tanks.

During [World War II](#), United States ships in the [Escort Carrier](#) category were given the [Ship Prefix](#) 'CVE'. Crews joked that this stood for "Combustible, Vulnerable, Expendable" due to the ship's complete lack of armor and high numbers of ships constructed.



Our government has proclaimed it is important to defend Canada's Northern waters and spaces. Really? Below is a brief comparison of Canadian and Russian capabilities in one area.

## CANADIAN GEAR

### Canadian military/naval Icebreaker currently commissioned -

The Canadian Coast Guard has two vessels in their "Heavy Icebreaker" class, and four in the "Medium Gulf/River Icebreaker" class. These are their only vessels capable of year-round operation in the high Arctic. These vessels all have a helicopter hangar and can carry and maintain a [Bo 105](#) helicopter, which is used for logistical purposes, as well as ice-spotting, and search and rescue.

All of the Canadian Coast Guard Icebreakers are more than 29 years old. The newest, Henry Larsen was commissioned in 1987. The oldest, Louis S St. Laurent, was commissioned in 1969.

The "Heavy Icebreaker" Louis S. St. Laurent was built in 1969, 393 feet long and has a displacement of 15324 tons. It is powered by diesel-electric motor.

The “Medium Icebreaker” Amundsen was built in 1979, 98.15 meters long and has a displacement of 5911 tons. It is powered by diesel-electric motor.

## WHAT’S OUT THERE?

On June 21, 2016, Russia unveils world's biggest nuclear icebreaker: Gigantic ship can smash through ice 10 feet thick and 13 feet deep

The enormous Arktika icebreaker is 586 feet long and more than 100 feet wide. It will be equipped with two water distillers, each able to process 70 tonnes of water.

The Arktika is set to become the most powerful twin-reactor icebreaker, and will join the Rosatomflot fleet to help maintain Russia's national defence and navigate the Arctic.

The ship was launched in a gala ceremony at the Baltic Shipyard in St. Petersburg on June 21, 2016, and is the leading ship in Russia's Project 22220.

It's been nearly three years since the Arktika's keel was laid in November 2013, providing the structural support for the hull.

Russia's enormous icebreaker is 586 feet long and more than 100 feet wide, according to [Sputnik News](#), and will be able to break ice up to 10 feet thick, and 13 feet deep. 'The Arktika's launch is a victory in all senses,' said Rosatom chief Sergey Kiriyeenko. 'Today we can say that by the end of 2017, this icebreaker will join Rosatomflot. 'This will open up fundamentally new opportunities in front of our country in terms of maintaining the national defences and year-round navigation in the Arctic and ensuring economic development in a region that is of crucial importance to Russia, and the whole world.'



**LAST POST**

Rest in Peace, Brothers.

Mr. Reid Lillico

Captain John Short



Securitas

*Alexander Tsang CD*

MAJOR (RETIRED)

PRESIDENT

EDMONTON UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTE

[ALEXANDERHTSANG@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:ALEXANDERHTSANG@HOTMAIL.COM)



**IT IS TOO LATE TO SHARPEN SWORDS, WHEN THE DRUMS OF WAR ARE BEATING**