

CSMMI *Journal*

SPRING 2023



U.S. Purple Heart
Page 2636



The Incredible Journey
of Lino Fedato
Pages 2617



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MILITARY MEDALS & INSIGNIA

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CSMMI *Journal*

In This Issue

List of Advertisers.....	2611
President's Message	2612
CSMMI Executive	2613
How to Dispose of a Hobby Related Collection: Part 2.....	2614
Halt! What Goes There?.....	2615
The Incredible Journey of Lino Fedato	2617
Managing Your Collection	2623
Book Reviews.....	2631
Sit Rep #3.....	2632
Book Reviews.....	2635
The U.S. Purple Heart.....	2636
Vendors Wanted	2643
CSMMI Show Rules	2644
Society Aims & Objectives.....	2645
Journal Ad Rates.....	2646
Classified Ads	2647
Classified Ad Form	2648
Application for Membership	2649

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President's Message

Bryan Patterson, President, HM#953

Two thousand twenty-three has started off well for the Society. Our financial position is quite positive, our membership numbers are holding steady, and the monthly shows in January and February were well attended. The mask restrictions have been lifted at our shows but, if you have any concerns I suggest you wear one.



Many of the vendors are looking forward to the two-day Annual Show and Sale in June. Book the dates, June 16 & 17, 2023, and plan to attend. You will not be disappointed!

We will start taking reservations for bourse tables as of March 1, 2023. To reserve your spot contact either:

Mike McLean at 226-203-2504 - skyharbour12@gmail.com

OR

Bryan Patterson at 289-837-4067 - bryanpatterson@rogers.com

I would like to draw your attention to two particular articles in this issue of this Journal. Andy Traverse has provided Part Two of his piece entitled "*How to Dispose of a Hobby Related Collection*" which now completes this article. As mentioned in the last issue, please provide a copy of the article in your will kit for your executors. They will be glad you did. Juan José Besteiro has composed an excellent associated article on "*How to Manage Your Collection*". It provides ideas on how to inventory, display and protect your collection. Thank you both for your excellent input.

This issue features two articles submitted by non-members of the society. They were sought out because I knew they had a story to tell, and they both, after a lot of persuasion, agreed to share. We thank them for their submissions.

Most of us have relatives, friends or acquaintances that have interesting military stories to tell about their dads, grandfathers or other family members. Ask them to consider sharing their stories and associated artifacts with us, and perhaps, for the first time, with their families.

Continued on Page 2613

HOW TO DISPOSE OF A HOBBY RELATED COLLECTION: PART 2

By Andy Traverse #1655

Part 1 of this article, focused on considerations, options, methods and important factors involved in the disposal process of a hobby collection. While the principles apply to almost all hobby collections, the information is specifically designed to appeal to members of the CSMMI who collect medals, badges, general militaria and ephemera. There will come a time when important decisions will need to be made for the benefit of all stakeholders involved. There is nothing like an injustice to a collection, and especially the collector, when an executor or beneficiary disposes of important and historic artefacts, without realizing values reflecting the prevailing market rates. Some collectors reach a point in their lives when they wish to gradually or in one fell swoop dispose of their collections. Others find it difficult to let go and hang on till the very end. Some collectors are well prepared and organize inventories noting original purchase costs, while others procrastinate, to the extent that nothing is done to alleviate the stress of the responsibility that others may experience disposing a hobby collection.

This begs the question, what needs to be done before it is too late? It would be of great benefit to prepare a detailed inventory and an estimated value of a collection using modern technology and reference resources, which hardly existed 25 years ago. Or, one might consider employing the services of an accredited or registered appraiser specializing in the field of medals, badges and militaria. Such an appraiser is required to abide by a strict code of ethics and is bound to limit his or her undertaking to an appraisal only and not a purchase. This avoids any conflict of interest that may exist. The service provided by this individual may involve considerable time and effort with associated operating expenses. The resulting cost can be expensive however, an accredited or registered appraiser acts in a professional manner and the certification would be reflective of the current market value of a collection. Cataloguing and evaluation would be prepared providing a proper detailed appraisal of the collection. Periodic reviews and updated appraisals can also be certified by the same appraiser, as necessary, and at a reasonable cost. Lawyers, banks, accountants and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) would recognize

Continued on Page 2615

the appraisal as a stand-alone document. This is an important consideration for estate planning or collection disposal. There are no officially accredited or registered appraisers in the CSMMI. To source a registered appraiser the best independent resource in Canada would be among the membership listed with the Canadian Personal Property Appraisers Group (CPPAG).

It is also important to understand that there are different types of appraisals such as market value, liquidation, forced sale and replacement values. An evaluation reflecting the true market value of an item or collection would be the most appropriate approach though a replacement value might apply as necessary.

Other credible sources for appraisals include established dealers or merchants specializing in selling militaria or other hobby-related merchandise. There are numerous members of the CSMMI who operate hobby-related businesses. Their opinions in the form of appraisals or valuations may also be acceptable for official purposes by the very nature of their experience. In addition to this group, long-time collectors in a hobby also acquire expertise knowledge, including market values, and their contribution is no doubt invaluable.

Without doubt, a proper inventory and evaluation of a collection provides peace of mind to a collector and can ensure an efficient disposition of assets when necessary, as in the event of an unexpected circumstance or as part of a planned process.

Halt! What Goes There?

Bob Ion #961 has reached out to the membership to help identify a flag that has come into the Canadian Military Heritage Museum in Brantford, Ontario. If anyone is able to identify this flag and provide any background information please reply to info@csmmi.com.



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THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY OF LINO FEDATO

By Ralph Fedato

“Ralph Fedato has been a dear friend of mine for at least 45 years. During that time, Ralph has related to me snippets of his father Lino’s experiences in WWII which I found quite daring and exciting. About three years ago, I started asking Ralph to share some of the stories in the form of an article for our Journal. Finally, he agreed. Here it is.”

Bryan Patterson, HM #953

During the First and Second World Wars, everyone who joined the military forces in our region of northern Italy was either an Alpino or a Bersaglieri. The Alpini were specialized mountain infantry and had to be able to scale the Alps, usually carrying hundreds of pounds of equipment while doing so. My uncle Tony was a member of the Alpino. My grandfather was a Bersaglieri which was a unit made up of rifle marksmen,

Image from Custermen.com



A tropical pith helmet worn by 12th Bersaglieri. The tropical helmet was common for Italian troops in North Africa. Note the cock feathers and sand goggles. Cock feathers were also worn on their steel helmets.

noted for rapid deployment. The unique thing about the Bersaglieri was that they wore a plume on the helmets which draped over their faces to shield their aiming eye from the sun.

They had to be in superb physical condition in order to deploy quickly. Whether it was marching or going into battle, the Bersaglieri including their regimental band, always ran or double timed everywhere they went. These were the men who told me their war stories. For me it was like being in a room full of John Waynes and Gary Coopers.

My father broke with tradition and enlisted in the Italian Air Force. He was a navigator and the maintenance mechanic on a bomber. His journey began with constant bombing raids over Malta. On an emergency landing in the El Alamein area, he and a ground crew worked on repairing the plane. With no hanger available, they were out in the open at the edge of the air field. When they had finished the repairs, the other mechanic working with my dad went to the tool chest, tossed the wrench he was using on the ground alongside the chest, striking a land mine, instantly killing the mechanic.

Author's collection



Lino Fedato, right, during his deployment in North Africa

According to my father, he was always scared going into battle until the first shot was fired, at which point there was a job to be done and he did his job. The effect of the mechanic being killed proved to my father that death could come at any time so why worry about it, and, that was the last time my father worried about getting killed.

On another mission the bomber sustained heavy damage and was forced to make an emergency landing in El Alamein, just prior to the British forces attacking. When the British attacked El Alamein, my father and his bomber crew were assigned to a defensive position on the battlefield. My dad's crew removed the machine guns from their plane in order to have

Continued on Page 2619

additional fire power. It was around this time that my dad noticed that there were Bersaglieri arriving to reinforce the position.

Unlike other Italian armor divisions, that were supported by regular infantry units which were poorly trained and equipped, the Ariete armoured division that was coming to reinforce the position was supported by the Italian elite Bersaglieri regiment. For my father, this meant that there was a chance that he could meet up with two of his brothers who were with the Ariete. My uncle Reno was a tank commander and my uncle Giocondo was his driver. Unfortunately, only half of the division made it in time for the first battle and my uncles were not among them. That would have been something, three Fedatos in the same battle.

During the battle the heavy machine guns from the plane were quite an advantage, except for the fact that they were designed to be fired at 25,000 to 30,000 feet in the air where the air temperature is 50 to 60 degrees colder and they did not require any cooling apparatus. In the desert, it was a different story.

The guns overheated relatively quickly. My dad was amazed that these Bersaglieri would take turns strapping their belts around the machine gun's handles and spinning them over their heads to cool them. To do this, they required tremendous strength. The most remarkable thing about this maneuver was that soldiers spinning the guns had to stand erect and expose themselves to the enemy fire. No one was ordered to do this they all volunteered to a man, to give their comrades a better chance to survive.

There were approximately 1,000 men defending the part of the line where my dad was. When the battle was over there were only 18 still alive, including my father, who was wounded and woke up in a British field hospital. The security at the hospital was pretty lax because the enemy knew that anyone trying to escape and get back to the Italian – German lines would have to navigate the desert which was almost impossible and they could easily perish.

My father could easily pass as an Arab and move about British territory without being noticed. He escaped from the hospital and headed west, deeper into British lines disguised as an Arab, and made his way to the coast where he managed to get aboard a boat heading for Italy.

My two uncles of the Ariete participated in the second battle of El Alamein where they were completely encircled. Only 14 tanks of the 200 plus tanks of the



Lino Fedato, disguised as an Arab to aid his escape.

division escaped the encirclement and my uncles' tank was one of them. Rommel mourned the loss of the division, writing that its final action had been conducted with exemplary courage and that "in the Ariete we lost our oldest Italian comrades, from whom we had probably always demanded more than they, with their poor armament, had been capable of performing. On December 8, 1942, the 132nd Armored Division "Ariete" was declared lost due to war time events. The war was over for my uncles and they headed home.

Upon my father's return to Italy, he and his reorganized bomber crew were transferred to the Russian front. Their assignment was to bomb and destroy any infrastructure that could aid the Russians steamrolling over what was left of the Italian Army. In January 1943, it was ordered to return home. It was around this time that the fabled Alpino Julia Division (from our area of Italy) was completely destroyed. Of the 335,000 Italians that invaded Russia, less than 40,000 came home, a lot of them gravely ill and suffering from frostbite. My Uncle Tony was among them. Once they were back in Italy they were disbanded and later reorganized but the war was over for Uncle Tony.

The Italian Airforce stayed behind to continue and try to slow the Russians. My father's crew landed at a desolate air field to take on fuel and rearm. Unfortunately, the extreme cold weather took its toll on the plane and the booster batteries, making it impossible to start the engines and fly out of danger. And thus, began my dad's long, treacherous walk home in extreme Russian winter weather.

In 1970, Italy honored the Bersaglieri unit from the First World War that participated in the Battle for Vittorio Veneto, the battle that collapsed the Austrian-Hungarian Empire and brought the war to an end for Italy. This was my grandfather's unit, and as he had passed away four years earlier, I was fortunate enough to be selected to represent him, and march in the parade. All the survivors were in their 70s and older. At the start of the parade, each survivor was adamant and insisted on running as they had always done in the past. Maintaining this tradition was incredibly important to them regardless of their age and heat.

Continued on Page 2621

At this festival I met my father's commander and he told me what happened that fateful day when he had my father tried to boost the batteries and start the aircraft's engines. He called down to my dad and asked him, "Fedato are we flying out of here or are we walking?" He got no response from my dad but out of the corner of his eye he glimpsed dad walking towards the tree line and that was that. No speeches, no long goodbyes, just something that had to be done to survive.

My dad had no idea of the extenuating circumstances that were going to make his perilous journey even more difficult – any Russian soldier and/or Russian partisan, whose credo was "see a German/Italian, kill a German/Italian", had to be avoided at all costs. By now the Italian Forces had changed sides, also making Germany the enemy. During the walk out of Russia my father was aided by a Russian girl. In her honor, he named his first daughter and my sister, Sonia. My sister's name is of Russian/Slavic origin and was not a very common Italian name when she was born.

Most Italian soldiers who were still in Russia were not aware that Italy changed sides in September 1943. Once in Germany all of these soldiers were rounded up and transported to concentration camps. My father was among them and he realized that his best chance to escape would be in transit before getting to the concentration camp. He picked out a German guard who was his size because he was planning on taking his coat and parts of his uniform that would help him get back to Italy. That is exactly what he did. He walked out of Germany, across Austria and into Northern Italy.

Close to home he was still wearing a rag tag German Wehrmacht uniform which led him to be taken prisoner by Italian Partisans. He convinced his captors to seek out my grandfather to prove that he was an Italian and not the enemy. Finally, my father's war was over.

His trek had lasted nearly 10 months and he had travelled approximately 4,100 kilometers (2,500 miles). To put this in perspective, the distance from Halifax to the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border is 4,088 kilometers.

Fifteen years later he decided to move his family to a country he fought against, where he could not read or write the language, to make a better life for his family, including me. I guess, compared to what he had survived during his war, moving to Canada was a walk in the park for Lino Fedato.



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MANAGING YOUR COLLECTION

By Juan José Besteiro #1859

A common activity amongst many members of the CSMMI is the searching for and acquiring items that enhance our interest in militaria and military history. As our interest grows, so do our collections. In this article, I will provide advice on how to create and maintain an inventory of your collection, and provide suggestions on how one may display and protect your pieces.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INVENTORY

Collections are meant to grow, and sometimes they grow past our ability to mentally catalogue our items. As a collector, how many times has a visitor been over to your house and with great excitement they ask for information a particular piece that you are displaying only for you to forget the information – or worst yet the name of the piece? As a vendor, how many times have you had to look up the same information about an item you want to sell? Even more troublesome, how many of us have forgotten what they have paid for an item bought many years before. The answer is, we have all done this.

As militaria collectors we pride ourselves in remembering important historical information relevant to our hobby and our artifacts, yet we sometimes overlook the importance of inventorying our items in a meaningful way. To create an inventory, we can use programs from Microsoft office.

For a professional detailed inventory, a spreadsheet application, such as Excel, is the best. With it one can store information such as:

Name of Item, Date of Purchase, Price Paid, Vendor, Provenance, Characteristics, and any relevant Notes that might be of help. Unique identification details, such as listing medals with the recipient's service number, rank, name and unit and any devices attached to the ribbon (i.e., Mention in Dispatches oak leaf device) can be recorded.

The spreadsheet can also include a column for items that are sold and to record items that leave your collection.

There are templates already available on the program that can easily be modified for your militaria information.

Below is an example of a Militaria Collection Inventory created using Microsoft Excel which illustrates how individual items may be listed. The beauty of using a spreadsheet is that each column, row, and cell can be customized to meet your needs. In this example, the headings are ID No., Date Purchased, Description, Photo, Medal No., Nation, Era, Vendor, Purchased at, Amount Paid, Currency, Conversion Rate, CAN \$ equiv., Est. 2023 Value, Sold Date, Sold Price and Notes.

Lawrence Stasiuk

ID No.	Date Purchased	Description	Photo	Medal No.	Nation	Era	Vendor	Purchased at	Amount Paid	Currency	Conversion Rate	CAN \$ equiv.	Est. 2023 Value	Sold Date	Sold Price	Notes
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1003	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1003	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
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1005	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1005	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
1006	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1006	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
1007	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1007	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
1008	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1008	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
1009	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1009	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
1010	10/15/2010	1914-1918 War Medal	[Image]	1010	Canada	1914-1918	John Smith	London, Ontario	100.00	USD	1.00	100.00	100.00			
TOTAL FULL SIZE METAL ACQUISITION COST																
TOTAL ESTIMATED VALUE ADJUSTED TO 2023															1,000.00	

Sample of an Excel Militaria Inventory Record.

The spreadsheet allows you to insert a conversion rate for items purchased in another currency to determine the Canadian equivalent, periodically estimate current values and total the value of your collection to support any insurance coverage or claim. There are also columns to record the sale of items so you can keep track of items you have let go.

It is also recommended to take a photograph of each of your pieces. This can easily be done using a smart phone. Each picture can be cross referenced to your inventory to aid in identification and help with any documentation for insurance coverage or making a future insurance claim. A picture should also be included to illustrate the condition at the time of inventory. Taking proper pictures is important, making sure to show all prominent details, condition, and flaws or damage, or any unique features such as inscriptions that are specific to the artifact.

While cataloging our items, an artistic spin can be added to the collection's inventory to have it also tell a story. The information we wish to conserve can be combined with a picture record of the item while also adding general

Continued on Page 2625

information regarding the piece. This example was created using the Microsoft PowerPoint application.

Juan José Besteiro



A sample picture of a display made with PowerPoint from author's personal collection inventory.

Writing a short historical note on a family item or a prized antique connects you to that piece's history while aiding in preserving it. Personally, cataloging my items has also given me a good opportunity to expand on the research that I conduct, making it possible to go back and add points of interest and other notes through the years as this information becomes available. This can create some amazing stories attached to our items as we research its history. Recently, I have been using *Ancestry.com* to significant effect in finding records, as well as personal portraits that add to the story.

Correct inventorying and cataloguing of a collection is not only useful for collectors, but becomes crucial for loved ones should they become responsible for our collections or have to deal with the liquidation of our estates. We would not want those hours of research go to waste should one of our loved ones take over management of our collection. Similarly, we would want them to maximize the sale of the collection. The more detail that we put into our records, the more useful it can become.

The effort we spend on our inventory is also a duty that our artifacts deserve, and this is tied to our responsibilities as guardians of these items for future generations. We must remember that we are temporary keepers of these pieces

and while we appreciate and study our items, we should also be looking towards the future that these pieces might have and how we can contribute to the historical memory of any item.

This information is important when it comes to having your collection insured. The data, values, and the pictures you have collected overtime will make this an easier task.

DISPLAYING YOUR COLLECTION

We spend so much of our time and money on our collections that it only makes sense to put an equal amount of effort into our displays. How many of us have been invited to see someone's collection only to be greeted by all sorts of lose bits and ends without any explanation or organization. Why spend the time and effort to buy a collectable item for it to just sit away in a drawer or box unappreciated and unprotected? Even the smallest of collections can reach a greater degree of worth and beauty if properly displayed.

There are several ways of displaying your collection including glass cabinets, wall mounted displays, shadow boxes, or simple glass frames. A nice frame or Rikers tray filled with labelled and organized items can make the difference between a collection and a hoard.

To avid militaria aficionados, the correct placement according to order of precedence and even lineage adds another level of professionalism and intricacy to displaying militaria accurately. We must take care to make sure that the correct face of the medal or item is displayed and that it has its proper accompanying ribbon and attachments. I have been guilty of placing medals with the wrong ribbon in the past – and with bars, scrolls, and palms - this can get even more complicated.

The composition of your display can aid in telling a story clearly. We must imagine our display as a vessel to tell a story, educate someone, and pay respects to the sacrifices endured by the item's earlier owners. It is for this reason that we back our collection with knowledge.

There are militaria catalogues, references, and texts which give a collector inside knowledge about the many items one could collect in this hobby and give information on the correct order of precedence when mounting a display. A good source is *The Independent Price and Collectors Handbook* by Token Publishing, or the *Medal Yearbook*. There are also a number of online sites and communities that will aid with identification, verifications and valuations.

The bottom line in placing your items in any type of display is both for

Continued on Page 2627

presentation and for protection. Glass displays protect our delicate items from dust and from unwanted touch while special types of glass with ultraviolet light inhibitors can protect fabrics from the effects of sunlight. Several levels of elegance and protection can be achieved with different types of display cases.

Displaying documents can be challenging. We must be careful of light fading our articles. It is for this reason that I rotate document displays and leave more fragile ones in special folders. These prevent folding and allow for the documents to remain flat.

Juan José Besteiro



A selection of Canadian militaria protected in a glass display cabinet.

PROTECTING YOUR COLLECTION

As collectors, we are but guardians of our items until they are passed off to other caring hands. We need to protect those pieces that are in our collections against mishandling and the ravages of time. Measures must be taken to protect against fading, discoloration, drying of materials, insect infestations, and inappropriate handling.

It is especially important to choose the correct placement of our displays. Sunlight or strong light is one of the biggest enemies in our hobby. Prior to displaying an artifact or collection, we must ensure the sun or excessive intense light does not damage our items. These should never be in direct sunlight.

Uniforms or other antique cloth items should be displayed on a rotational basis. That is no more than six months displayed in natural light before being removed and stored in darkness for another six months. This technique, used by museums around the world, extends the life and colours of fabric enormously.

Metals used in gun barrels, swords, medals, and plaques must be protected from human touch, as the oils and acids in our skin causes oxidation. A good pair of cotton gloves allows handling these items while protecting them from corrosion and wear.

The Canadian Conservation Institute has created useful guides on how to properly clean and maintain medals and metallic objects. These guides are found on their website under: <https://bit.ly/3RLtAZM>

The artificial lights we use to illuminate our displays may also be detrimental to artifacts. Modern lights may emit heat that can dry leather, fabrics, and plastics. Therefore, it is important that we consider the heat being emitted and isolate vulnerable items from the light source.

Water is a big hazard to any surface. Similarly, water moisture or high humidity can be equally problematic. The location for storing or displaying your collectibles should minimize potential damage from water and humidity.

Just as we want to protect our collections from the ravages of time, it is equally important that we are not overly eager in our quest to clean a particular item. We could damage it or even change it to a less appealing form by making it look too new. We must come to realize that some collectors would prefer to keep their pieces in as much of an “as is” condition as possible. Having said this, it is important to remove surface dirt, corrosive elements and soil.

Patina is something that many collectors look for when collecting badges and medals. We risk removing this layer, formed over time, if we are careless in our cleaning. The chemicals and liquids we use in trying to shine our metal items could very well damage the surface. Appearance also applies to plating. Done to add a layer of shine to a medal, these medals have now become less desirable than ones with their original finish.

In conclusion, let’s review what we have learned and put it to use. There is no time like the present to start this never-ending process. Share the knowledge of our items with family members, let them know their historical and financial value. Failing to do this, risks future generations giving up items with family history or worse yet, throwing them in the trash. The importance of an



Collection protected from dust and the elements behind glass cases.

inventory, displaying your collection, and protecting your collection are all important pillars in keeping an active collection with foresight into the future.

An inventory template in Excel format is available for download on the CSMMI website under the resources section. See <http://bit.ly/3lme760>

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SIT REP #3

By Bill Alexander #721

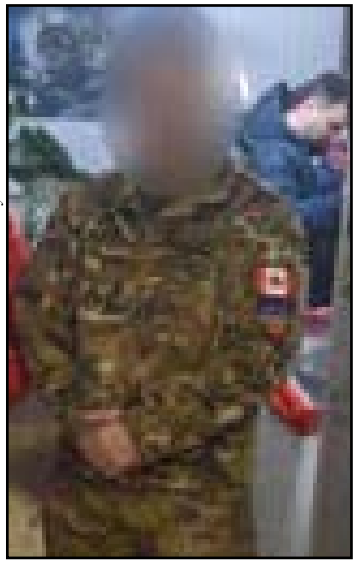
1. The war of Russian aggression in the Ukraine has inspired volunteers from around the world to offer their services to fight the invaders. Canadian mercenaries adopted brigade patches of their design. Two of the patches are shown below. The volunteers and their insignia are in no way sponsored or authorized by the Canadian Forces or the Government of Canada.

Author's collection



Norman Brigade patch

Library and Archives Canada



Norman Brigade patch worn below Canada flag patch



Canadian Ukrainian Brigade

Continued on Page 2633

2. The Toronto Scottish Regiment celebrated their 100th Anniversary in part with this commemorative uniform patch.



Author's collection

*Toronto Scottish
100th Anniversary patch*

3. The Canadian contingents to the Enhanced Protection Force Latvia wear several patches, including several variations of the NATO eFP patch and the Latvian brigade patch.



Author's collection

NATO Enhanced Protection Force patch variants



Latvian Brigade Patch



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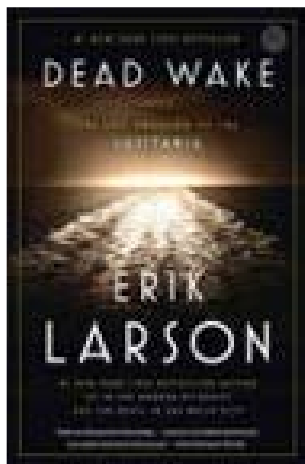
Visit www.csmmi.com or contact show organiser
Mike McLean (226) 203-2504
email: skyharbour12@gmail.com

Book Reviews

By Bryan Patterson HM #953

DEAD WAKE – The Last crossing of the Lusitania

By Erik Larson, by Crown Publishing Group, first published 2015, 430 pages



On May 1, 1915 the English ocean liner RMS Lusitania set out from New York bound for Liverpool, England. Every student of history knows how that voyage ended! Hit by a torpedo, the grand old lady of the sea was gone in 14 minutes along with a record number of children and infants. I thought I knew the story - I didn't.

The author tells the tale almost like a mystery novel switching between the hunter and the hunted. As Unterseeboot-20 (U-20) commanded by Captain Walther Schwieger and the RMS Lusitania commanded by Captain William Turner made their way toward a rendezvous with history, an array of forces both big and small came together to produce one of the great disasters of WWI. Many passengers on the Lusitania are introduced and followed throughout the story and their individual fates shared as a result of the sinking. The Lusitania's manifest is discussed and it is implied that there was in fact war material on board as Germany claimed. A highly recommended read if you want to know the whole truth of the event.

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THE U.S. PURPLE HEART

By Bart Armstrong, CD

One of the most recognized and respected awards given to members of the United States of America armed forces is the Purple Heart. Since 1932, the decoration has been a military medal awarded in the name of the President. It has evolved over time to recognize those wounded and killed while serving with the US military. In the order of precedence, the Purple Heart is ranked immediately behind the Bronze Star Medal and ahead of the Defense Meritorious Service Medal.

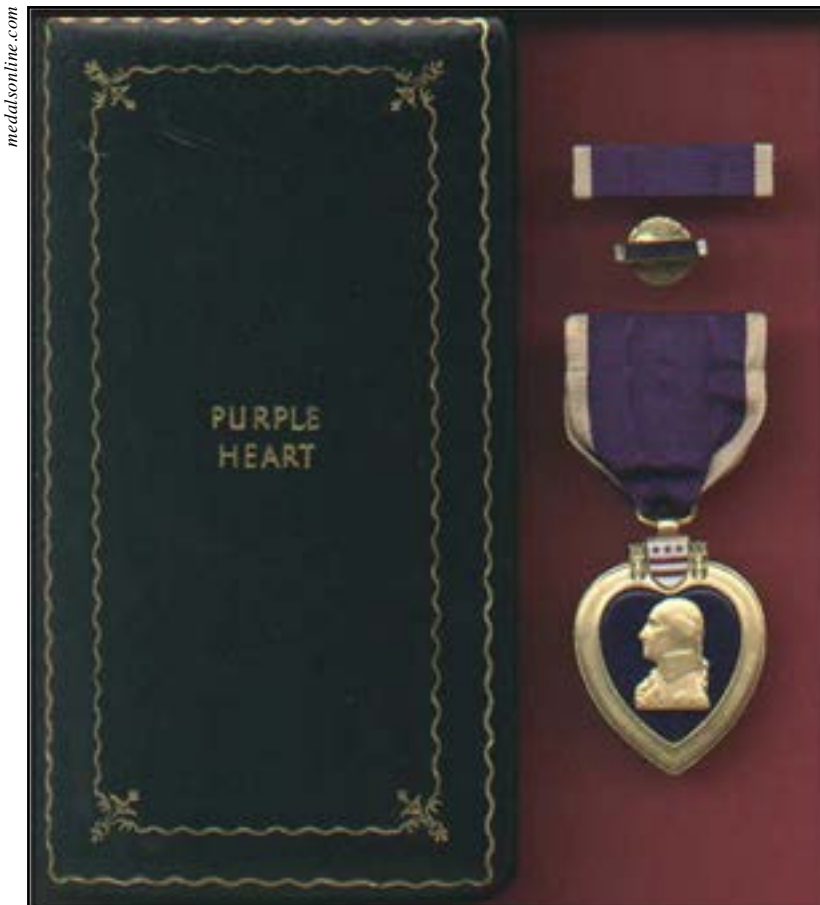


Figure 1: The current version of The Purple Heart (obverse) shown in its ceremonial presentation box, with a ribbon, and a lapel pin.

Continued on Page 2637

Army regulations specified the design of the medal as an enamel heart, purple in color and showing a relief profile of George Washington in Continental Army uniform within a quarter-inch bronze border. (see Figure 1) Above the enameled heart Washington's family coat of arms sits between two sprays of leaves. On the reverse, below the shield and leaves, is a raised bronze heart (not enameled), bearing the inscription "For Military Merit". (Figure 2) The medal is suspended from a purple ribbon 1 5/8" wide with a 1/8" wide white border along each side. The medals have been awarded with or without an inscription naming the recipient. The image of George Washington and the inscription allude to the origins of this decoration.



Figure 2: Reverse side showing the inscription "For Military Merit" and a typical engraving of the recipient's name.

The decoration in use today was established on February 22, 1932, the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth. The original award was actually two cloth badges in the shape of a purple heart. It was established by General George Washington of the US Continental Army on August 7, 1782 as the "Badge of Military Merit" for service during the American Revolutionary War (1775 – 1783).

The General Order issued on February 7, 1782 from the General's headquarters in Newburgh, New York states:

"Honorary Badges of distinction are to be conferred on the veteran non commissioned officers and soldiers of the army who have served more than three years with bravery, fidelity and good conduct; for this purpose a narrow piece of white cloth of an angular form is to be fixed to the left arm on the uniform Coat. Non commissioned officers and soldiers who served with equal reputation more than six years are to be distinguished by two pieces of cloth set in parallel (sic) to

each other in a similar form; should any who are not entitled to these honours have the insolence to assume the badges of them they shall be severely punished. On the other hand it is expected those gallant men who are thus designated will on all occasions be treated with particular confidence and consideration.”

The General ever desirous to cherish virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of Military merit, directs that whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth, or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding. Not only instances of unusual gallantry, but also of extraordinary fidelity and essential service in any way shall meet with a due reward. Before this favour can be conferred on any man, the particular fact, or facts, on which it is to be grounded must be set forth to the Commander in Chief accompanied with certificates from the Commanding officers of the regiment and brigade to which the Candidate for reward belonged, or other incontestable proofs, and upon granting it, the name and regiment of the person with the action so certified are to be enrolled in the book of merit which will be kept at the orderly office. Men who have merited this last distinction to be suffered to pass all guards and sentinels which officers are permitted to do.

The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is thus open to all. This order is also to have retrospect to the earliest stages of the war, and to be considered as a permanent one.”

credit: Mountvernon.org

One reference says that Martha Washington actually cut the silk from a gown and apparently did the stitching of the words on each badge. Another source suggests the material for the badges came from a bolt of material Washington received from General Lafayette.

left- identifymedals.com, right- quora.com



Figure 3: Two different examples of Merit Badges. Note the slight differences between them, indicative of being hand made.

Continued on Page 2639



Figure 4: Two versions of the Badge of Military Merit. Over the years these badges were recovered from different sources. The weathering may explain the slight change in colouring.

This order created the badges for the Army, not for those in the Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and eventually the Air Force. There are several other observations. The very last words of General Washington's General Order of 7 August 1782 notes that the badges are... *"to be considered a permanent one."* Yet after the Revolutionary War, and in fact until the early 1940's, it fell out of use. Ignoring this fact, most internet references and elsewhere tell us that the Purple Heart (read Badges of Merit and Military Merit), is the oldest military decoration in continuous use in the US.

Absent from award from September 1873 until 1942, (though since having been backdated to the Civil War), it can hardly be called continuous use. Today's Purple Heart is a medal, not a badge. The awards called for in the 1782 Order never used the term medal. It created two sets of strips based on time in service. The order also created two badges, one being the Badge of Merit, and the other being the Badge of Military Merit. The Merit and Military Merit badges fell into disuse after the Revolutionary War. But the strips of cloth designating time of service continue and are now known as service stripes. It really is the stripes, later called stripes, that have been in continuous use since the revolutionary days.

Most references note that there were only three "Purple Hearts" in Revolutionary days. Over the last decade I have come across 7 names with the awards, and there may be more. Confusion may be attributed to poor record keeping.

The two pages shown in Figures 5 & 6 are part of the discharge papers issued to a revolutionary soldier by the name of Michael Arbour. Upon close inspection the middle of the first page bears the signature of George Washington. While

most difficult to see, Washington's signature again appears above the third last typed line. In the 2nd last line you can read how the soldier also received a **Badge of Merit**. The general's signature again appears on the 2nd page of this document. While most references say that only three of these original honor badges were awarded, this document proves that there were at least four. And this man was a Canadian, from Montreal.

fold3.com/image/10941329

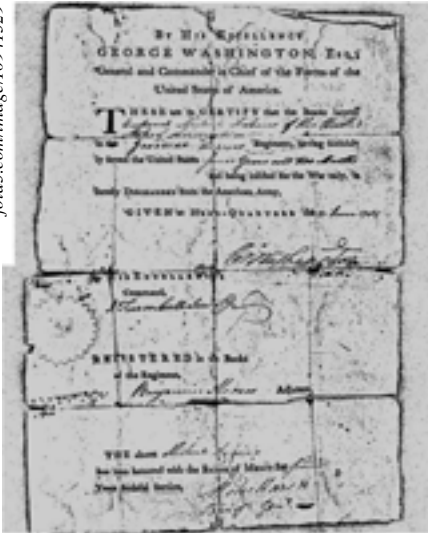


Figure 5: Discharge paper issued to Corporal Michael Arbour

fold3.com/image/10941329



Figure 6: Furlough certificate issued to Corporal Michael Arbour.

After the Revolutionary War, the badge became dormant for about 150 years. But in 1927, General George Summerall, then serving as US Chief of Defence Staff, directed that a bill be sent to Congress asking for a revival of the Badge of Military Merit. For some reason the bill was later pulled. Four years later, his successor General Douglas MacArthur, resurrected the idea of the medal. As Chief of Staff, he announced that by order of the Secretary of War, the **Purple Heart** was established on 22 February 1932. This being... “revived out of respect to his (General Washington) memory and military achievements.”

This award did not include the Marines, the US Coast Guard or the Navy - the later at the time feeling the medal was simply an army medal. But the massive slaughter at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 soon changed the minds of those in power. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9277 of December 1942 authorized the award of the Purple Heart to personnel from all of the military services and extended it to cover that event, the very day before America's entry into WWII.

Continued on Page 2641

During the “*Day of Infamy*,” Lt. Annie G. Fox was the Chief Nurse at a 30-bed hospital at Pearl Harbor’s Hickam Field, with her crew of 6 nurses. Much is written about her on the internet, but in short, she received a Purple Heart for her outstanding performance of duties in the handling of hundreds of wounded and dying, organizing civilians to come to her aid, and assisting in operations on the brave souls in her care.

Annie Fox’s award was later rescinded as she was not wounded. But in its place, she was awarded the Bronze Star, the 4th highest individual military award. For years she was claimed to have been the first woman to be awarded the Purple Heart, but another would later rightfully claim that status. The news accounts of the day and the record show her as being from Massachusetts. Truth be known, she was born in a place called East Pubnico, near the southern tip of Nova Scotia, Canada.

Pearl Harbor Warbirds & wearthemilitary.com



Figure 7: Major Annie Fox wearing the Purple Heart ribbon prior to it being rescinded and replaced by the Bronze Star Medal.

The story of the Purple Heart and its requirements have changed several times over the years. There were periods where one had to be in the face of the enemy, when posthumous awards were not allowed, when wounds were not necessary, and other changes. In 1952, the availability of the medal was again back dated, to April 5, 1917. More recently it was back dated as far as the US Civil War and all wars since.



This picture is of Beatrice MacDonald, another American nurse, who served as a Chief Nurse at a frontline British Hospital in 1917. She lost her right eye during a German bombing of the extremely well identified hospital in which she worked. In 1936 she received a Purple Heart for actions dating back to August of 1917. This predates Annie Fox's Purple Heart medal, making her the first woman to be awarded the Purple Heart.

It has been said that Bernice MacDonald was the most decorated WWI nurse from any country having been awarded the American Distinguished Service Cross (first recipient of either sex), the British Military Medal, the

Royal Red Cross and the French Croix de Guerre. It should also be noted that this nurse was from North Bedeque, PEI, Canada, making the first two recipients of the Purple Heart Canadians.

It is also worth mentioning that the Purple Heart is the highest award that is automatically given to any officer or enlisted person as soon as the criteria are met, meaning there is no proposal or review unlike other awards for valor or merit. It can also be awarded multiple times for wounds received on separate occasions. The record number of awards is nine to Curry T. Haynes.

Due to various reasons, the books and records for the Purple Heart are scattered and no doubt incomplete. A perfect example of this was surprise to behold at the 75th anniversary of Gettysburg. Among the thousands in the crowds, many being veterans of the Civil War, three men, probably in their late 90s, showed up wearing Purple Hearts. Yet there were no records of the awards till the men came forth wearing the medals.

There have been more than 1.8 million Purple Heart medals presented. Yet, surprisingly, only about 500 went to women! These details and more may be found in almost 600 stories at my site, www.canadianmedalofhonor.com.

About the author

Bart Armstrong, CD served 17 years in the Canadian Armed Forces reserve. He researches and writes about the Canadians who have been awarded the US Medal of Honor and Purple Heart. Many of these stories may be read on his website www.canadianmedalofhonor.com. He currently resides in Victoria, BC.

Vendors Wanted

The CSMMI invites vendors to our monthly shows.
In 2023, the CSMMI will run 8 shows.

January 15 · February 19 · March 19 · April 16
May 21 · September 17 · October 15 · November 19

Tables are available for rent by members at \$25.00 per table per show and non-members at \$35.00 per table per show.
Vendors shall align with the core aims and mission of the Society.

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CSMMI SHOW RULES

The CSMMI Executive has approved the following show rules.

MONTHLY SHOWS:

1. No entrance to anyone except vendors before 8:00 AM
2. Vendors will staff their tables until the close of the show (advertised as 12:00 PM) unless otherwise given permission by the organizer to leave early.
3. Limit of one helper per vendor.
4. Bourse tables rented out to any person (vendor) must be used as a sales venue area, and the person (vendor) must staff the table until the end of the show (advertised as 12:00 PM) unless otherwise given permission by the CSMMI organizer to leave early.
5. Failure to comply with any of the above rules could result in suspension of privileges to attend future shows.

ANNUAL SHOW:

1. No entrance to the bourse area to ANYONE except vendors, helpers, persons putting up displays, and CSMMI organizing personnel before 11:00 AM on the first day of the event, i.e. Friday, June 16, 2023
2. Limit of two (2) helpers per vendor.
3. Vendors will staff their tables until the advertised close of the show for each day of the two-day event.
4. Failure to comply with the CSMMI rules and regulations could result in suspension of privileges to attend future CSMMI events.

Effective: January 10, 2023

SOCIETY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The Canadian Society of Military Medals and Insignia (CSMMI) was founded on March 21, 1965 for the purpose of advancing the study of military orders, decorations, medals, insignia, accoutrements, documents and all related militaria. The Society seeks to encourage popular interest and to gather and publish information in all matters related thereto, along educational and historical lines. It also seeks to foster the preservation of such honours, awards, insignia and items of military interest for future generations.

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Inserts should be of light weight paper and must be provided ready-folded for insertion in the Journal mailings. The base rate is \$ 60.00 per mailing but this may be subject to an increase should additional pages result in an increase in the costs of mailing the Journal.

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Up to 20 Words	\$4.00
21 - 40 words	\$8.00
41 - 60 words	\$12.00

Payment must accompany the advertisement. The placing of classified ads is restricted to CSMMI members. Please use form provided in the Journal.

Advertising space will be provided, as a service, to members who are searching for items to buy, sell or trade. Name, address, telephone number, etc. are NOT included in the word count.

Photographs for classified ads will be printed at a cost of \$10.00 each (black and white). A SASE should be included if the return of the pictures is desired.

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(Founded 1965)

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(CSMMI form Nov 2021)



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