

Church Parade



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The cadet band entertained us after the parade.



The Poppy Draw conducted by Poppy Chair Cyril Best & help by Veteran Doug Haigh. Dave Wylie was one lucky winner.



Thanks to the ladies who helped with the pot luck lunch

The Arrow points one way.

We all live in a city or a town where there are one way streets. City fathers or mothers, in their wisdom have decided that if all the traffic on one street moved in a certain direction and all on another a different way then the whole movement of traffic will be improved.

There are in life more things than traffic which move one way, where we might say the arrow points one way. Life itself moves one way, history is a one-way street. Nothing we can do can ever change what has been done. In the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam there is a verse which goes this. Quote:

"The moving finger writes.
And having writ moves on,
Nor all your piety or wit can move it back,
To cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

This verse is a commentary on life, it is a commentary on history. No matter how astute or shrewd we are we cannot roll back life to live again the experiences we have had. No matter how vivid we may be able to recall what has gone before we cannot live it again. No more will the Newfoundlanders pause and check their rifles before beginning the assault at Beaumont Hamel, where so many of them died. Canadians will never again plough their way ashore at Juno Beach.

Aging fliers will no more look down through flak-filled skies at a target in Germany. The phrase 'Sink the Bismarck' will be relegated to the pages of the History channel. Those who were in Trafalgar Square on that day when it was finally announced that World War II was over, will never again repeat the feeling about what they had accomplished or that they survived.

Is that all we can say, like Omar Khayyam, 'The moving finger writes and having writ moves on? Are there not lessons to be learned from the past? Do not our experiences we have had provide that pattern on which we write what life has for us? Do not or should not nations learn from what they have done to shape the future?

When World War II was over and the veterans came home they took over society. They spread out across the land and became the force which shaped the western world in the middle of the last century. They came home and became parliamentarians, they became doctors and clergymen and clergy women, they became

teachers and lawyers. Some became farmers and others became fishermen. Some became miners and others worked in factories. Across the whole spectrum of society they made their mark and created a world which the generation of today has inherited. There were some who spent the rest of their days in hospital. Some of them also made their mark.

And now that generation has grown old. For them the moving finger has writ. Just a remnant remains. Practically all who remain have reached eighty years of age or more. No longer do they call the shots in society. The arrow points forward to the generation which is now. You have to learn the lessons which the past has taught.

You will not know what it is like to live in a world at war. There will indeed be various little conflicts around the world, but none to compare with the world we knew 1939 to 1945. Occasionally we are reminded that soldiers are being killed in battle when the body of one of them is brought back home and driven along the 'Highway of Heroes'. People will gather on the overpasses and watch the cortege go by and salute the fallen.

The arrow of life points one way. The arrow points forward. In the words of John McRae of World War I fame the torch is thrown to a new generation, 'be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep though poppies grow in Flanders fields.'

The world will move on in the direction the arrow points. The paranoia which built a Berlin wall or a wall between Israel and Palestine, or sees a Bin Laden behind every rock will come to an end. The conflict in Darfur will cease and the nations of the Middle East will pump their oil and build bigger and taller sky-scrapers. The western world will find a way to cope with unprecedented inflation. The world will learn the lessons the past has taught.

The moving finger writes and having writ, moves on, nor all your piety or wit, can move it back to cancel half a line, nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

Reflections by Rev. H.A. Batstone,
Padre of Legion 322 at the memorial
service on Nov. 9, 2008.

Pictured Left
Rev Herbert Batstone &
Rev Cathy Dilts

