

REUNION WEEKEND

28 September – 1 October 2017

OLD BRIGADE ACTIVITIES – CLASS OF 1972

4 January 2017

To: Secretary, Class of 72

WELCOME INTO THE OLD BRIGADE

This message is directed to you as Secretary of the RMC Graduating Class of 1972. By definition your class includes: (1) those who entered Royal Roads or RMC in 1968 and graduated from RMC in 1972; (2) those who entered CMR in 1967 and/or graduated from RMC in 1972; (3) those five-year or six-year ‘drops’, who graduated from RMC in 1972 (they may have divided loyalties with their original classes).and (4) those who are considered as ‘deemed’ members of the class (i.e., those who would have graduated from RMC in 1972, if only ...).

All members of the Class of 72, as defined above, regardless of whether they are ‘recruits’ or not, are invited to fully participate in the various Old Brigade activities described herein, including the Welcoming Ceremony at the Old Brigade dinner.

Your Class of 1972 is being welcomed into the Old Brigade at the time of its 45th Anniversary of Graduation in accordance with Article 14.3 of the Constitution. This will occur during Reunion Weekend 2017, which takes place about three months before members of your class who entered Royal Roads or RMC actually reach the 50-year mark. Nevertheless, these classmates will be entitled to adopt the customs normally accorded to members of the Old Brigade during Reunion Weekend. The three-month jump on the “50 years from entry” allows all members of your Class, including those who attended CMR, to become Old Brigaders at the same time.

In addition to private reunions held on Friday evening, 29 September by each of the reunion classes, there are five additional functions in which members of the Old Brigade take part. These functions are:

I – PRESENTATION OF CLUB COINS TO FYCs AFTER OBSTACLE COURSE

This highly successful activity was inaugurated several years ago and has now been incorporated by the College as a regular feature of Reunion Weekend activities. It takes place immediately following the running of the obstacle course on Friday afternoon and consists of members of the Old Brigade presenting Club coins to the First Year Cadets (FYCs – we used to call them ‘recruits’!) in recognition of their successful completion of an important 'rite of passage' that the obstacle course represents.

The following description of this event assumes that the scenario will be the same as in past years. When the course is completed (they start by squadrons at each obstacle, so they all finish at the same time), the squadrons run back to the parade square and form up in front of the rest of the Cadet Wing, which is awaiting them in a hollow square. This is quite an exciting time and observers have to be careful not to get mowed down by the tired but exhilarated participants. On the square there will also be cadet officers with the coins and the names of the cadets who will receive them in hand (each coin will have the number of the cadet engraved on it).

To complete the scenario, three Old Brigaders are required to present the coins to each squadron (one per flight/three flights per squadron). As soon as the cadets have caught their collective breath (they will

be muddy, grubby and generally cold) the presentations will begin guided by the cadet officers. Three presenters will suffice for each squadron but, given the informality of the occasion, the more the merrier! I suggest you detail a number of spare presenters in any case. We're to present coins and congratulate cadets in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere (parents and siblings will be mingling with us). Headgear for this event may be either the Old Brigade beret, the Old Brigade cap (the latter can be obtained from the Gift Shop), or a suitable RMC Club cap (also available at the Gift Shop).

It is requested that about 15 - 18 members of the Class of '70 be designated to participate in these presentations (there will also be presenters from the other Old Brigade reunion classes). I will contact you as the weekend approaches to confirm the exact number of presenters required from your class.

IMPORTANT – It has become the custom for the Recruit Class of the Old Brigade (the Class of '72 in this instance) to underwrite the cost of the coins, for RMC of Canada and RMC St-Jean. I am hoping that your Class will consider donating up to \$4000 to the RMC Foundation to cover this cost. I suspect you are already in the process of raising funds to contribute to the Foundation, and I am requesting that you set aside this amount for the coins. If you intend to leave it to the Class members to donate individually for the Coins, please ask them to make cheques out to the RMC Foundation, and to annotate the cheques "Old Brigade Coin Fund".

II – FIRST YEAR BADGING PARADE

It has been the custom for many years now for members of the Old Brigade to present the first year cadets with cap badges during the *First Year Badging Parade* on Saturday morning. This ceremony marks not only the end of orientation training, but also the integration of the FYCs into the Cadet Wing. As for the coin presentations described above, one member of the Old Brigade will present cap badges to the FYCs in each rank of each flight, (plus one or two more for such miscellaneous groups as 'light duty'). Other reunion classes of Old Brigaders will present to half of the flights. In this case also, as above, please designate 18 members, and several spares to head off any problems caused by absentees.

The drill for this pleasant and rewarding 'duty' is not complicated and requires no previous training. A cadet officer will accompany each presenter onto the square and take him to the proper flight. The FYCs are easy to identify because they are in 'blues' as compared to the 'scarlets' worn by all others on parade. In any event, the assigned cadet officer stays with the presenter and hands him the badges one at a time. There is no rush nor time limit, so slow-moving presenters needn't be concerned about taking too long. Generally, the presentations take about 12 to 15 minutes from beginning to end.

There may also be a few members of the Old Brigade and other Ex-Cadets not participating in class reunion activities who, nevertheless, wish to present to a particular cadet (e.g., a grandchild). This will not be finalized until mid-September, at which time I will get back to you.

This is a moving ceremony and one that is of particular importance to the cadets involved as well as their family members, many of whom will be in attendance. Receiving their cap badge from members of the Club's Old Brigade, all of whom have provided leadership in many diverse areas during their long careers, is something that the young recipients do not quickly forget. By taking part in this ceremony, we show our loyalty to the Club and College and set an example that the cadets (and other Ex-Cadets) aim to emulate over the years. It is all part of the mystique of the Old Brigade and helps to establish the leadership role we have in Club affairs.

Presenters must wear Old Brigade berets and ties, as well as medals. Ex-Cadet blazers are preferable, but business suits are acceptable. Berets and medals should also be worn by all members of the Old Brigade who attend the parade whether or not they are presenters. In general, berets are worn by members of the Old Brigade whenever they are on the College grounds during Reunion Weekend.

IIA – LUNCH FOLLOWING THE BADGING PARADE

This is not an Old Brigade activity, but is inserted here to keep the chronology correct. There is not a unique Old Brigade lunch. Immediately after the parade, some reunion classes, including those of the Old Brigade, have group photographs taken before going to lunch somewhere (photographs are the responsibility of the individual Classes). That 'somewhere' may be in Yeo Hall (upstairs) or at a location outside the College grounds organized by the class concerned.

Since the Yeo Hall lunch can be a bit of a press, arrangements are made for members of the Old Brigade, who so desire, to eat in the Cadet Mess (downstairs in Yeo Hall). There is an Annex to this mess that is reserved for Old Brigaders, so it is relatively private and quiet, but there is no bar. There will be a cadet guide at the entrance to Yeo Hall to direct those who wish to take advantage of this option.

Reservations for lunch in Yeo Hall, whether upstairs or downstairs (same ticket), must be made in advance. There will be subscription forms in the summer issue of VERITAS, or members can simply call Panet House any time at 1-888-386-3762 and make reservations verbally, or they can go to the Club web site at www.rmclub.ca and make them on-line.

III – OLD BRIGADE DINNER

For 30 September 2017, the ballroom at the Four Points Hotel, 285 King Street East, with a seating capacity of 300, is booked. The timing for the dinner is 1800 for 1900. If you are interested in seeing what it looks like, go to www.fourpointskingston.com. The price has yet to be negotiated, but I expect it to be in the neighbourhood of \$85 per person for members, \$95 for non-members. There will be full service at the tables; attendees are asked to purchase their own wine from the hotel's excellent cellars. Tickets will bear a tear-off stub entitling each attendee to a glass of wine or soft drink during the pre-dinner reception; additional libations are at the discretion, and expense, of the attendees. There will also be after-dinner dancing (to music suitable to our advanced ages!), which was a great hit last year.

Reservations must be made in advance through Panet House (details at Section IIA above). Tickets will not be sold at the door.

Dress for the dinner, in order of preference, is:

- Dinner jacket with miniatures (or service mess dress);
- Club blazer with Old Brigade tie and miniatures; or
- Business suit with Old Brigade tie and miniatures.

In previous years, some ladies have chosen to wear long dresses, others shorter evening wear. Widows of deceased members of the Old Brigade are most welcome. It is recommended that they be escorted by a class member.

Members may wish to reserve rooms in the Four Points, or other nearby hotels, to avoid the necessity of driving. The "special" rate for RMC Club is \$219.00 per night; members should identify themselves as members of a class, or of the RMC Club Old Brigade.

IIIA - OLD BRIGADE DINNER – WELCOMING CEREMONY FOR INCOMING CLASSES

At the end of the pre-dinner drinks period in the second floor lobby of the Four Points Hotel, I will ask members of the RMC Class of 1972 to stand aside while their ladies and the other attendees take their seats at the dinner tables. I will then ask them to enter the dining area (accompanied by a piper, if possible), onto the dance floor. Members of the Recruit Class will remain standing. It is important that ‘recruits’, ‘veterans’ and ‘deemed’ members of your class participate in this ceremony as a show of class solidarity.

The Welcoming Ceremony is simple and short. I will ask the following two questions:

- 1) “Who speaks for the Royal Military College Class of 1971?” Answer (example): “**9105 Ross Judd, Sir**”.
- 2) “How many members from the Royal Military College Class of 1972 are on parade? Answer: “**xx members of the Class of 1972 on parade, Sir.**”

Following these ritual questions and answers, it has been the custom for the Class to prepare a skit, song, poem or other diversion for the rest of us. While this is not mandatory, it is always fun and appreciated. When you are done, I will officially extend to you all a Welcome into the Old Brigade and we'll get on with the dinner. Following the meal, we will have a series of toasts; if possible we will be entertained by the RMC Pipes and Drums.

IV – EX-CADET PARADE TO THE ARCH

There will be three Old Brigade Squadrons this year for the Sunday morning parade to the Memorial Arch (unless our numbers increase to the point where we need three squadrons). All Old Brigaders *not* in the Class of 1972 will form #1 Squadron Old Brigade and No. 2 Squadron Old Brigade, while No. 3 Squadron Old Brigade will be made up of members from the Class of 72.

For those Ex-Cadets who wish to attend the Remembrance Service but are unable to march, transportation will be provided to the Arch immediately after the parade leaves the square. There will be plenty of chairs alongside the reviewing stand from which the march past can be viewed before the transport departs. This same transport will be available for the return trip following the service.

Some members of your class may wish to take part in the beginning of the parade, including the march past and salute, before falling out and taking the transport the rest of the way. If so, they are all most welcome to fall in at the same time as other members of the class. Old Brigaders in wheel chairs are encouraged to join the march (after co-opting one of their mates to push them along).

All members of the Old Brigade must wear the Old Brigade beret. Medals are also worn. Order of dress is the RMC Club blazer with Old Brigade tie, or business suits (plus, of course, the aforementioned tie). If it's cold or rainy, overcoats are most acceptable.

V – OLD BRIGADE LUNCH AFTER PARADE TO THE ARCH

There will be an Old Brigade lunch in the Senior Staff Mess following the parade to the Arch. All members of the Old Brigade and their families (including children and grandchildren) are most welcome (all other Ex-Cadets and their guests eat in Yeo Hall). The bar will be open! It will be a buffet lunch, but there are many tables where members can sit after getting their food. There may be an upper limit set on attendance, so I suggest that you book early. As for the Saturday lunch and Old Brigade dinner, *tickets must be purchased in advance from Panet House or online at the Club web site (details above at Section IIA).*

PROCUREMENT OF OLD BRIGADE BERETS AND TIES

Old Brigade berets and ties can be ordered from the Kit Shop at Panet House or online from the Club web site (details given in Section IIA above). With regard to the beret, the head circumference of the intended wearer must be measured before ordering to allow selection of the proper beret size. The women at Panet House know what sizes match what circumferences; this information is also detailed on the web site. I suggest ordering in advance to avoid the crush in the Gift Shop once Reunion Weekend gets underway.

WEARING OF BERET, TIE AND MEDALS

When on the College grounds during reunion weekends, graduation ceremonies and the like, it is customary for members of the Old Brigade to wear the Old Brigade beret and tie. I will not presume to tell you how to wear the beret (as a retired naval officer, that would be presumptuous on my part).

In addition to the Old Brigade beret and tie, the wearing of medals is *de rigueur* for the Saturday Badging Parade and the Sunday parade to the Arch. As noted earlier, miniature medals should be worn to the Old Brigade Dinner.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

All members of the Old Brigade attending Reunion Weekend are encouraged to become paid up members of the Club, if they are not already so. The Club expends great effort and much time in organizing Reunion Weekend, for which there is no cover charge. The payment of Club membership dues helps to defray costs as well as indicating loyalty to the Club and College.

Cheers,



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Adjutant, Old Brigade