

## FRANK ROBERT MCGUIRE, 1921-2009

Frank McGuire spent virtually his entire working life and retirement writing about military history. His work was both his passion and his hobby.

Frank was born in Barrie in 1921. His father, Arthur McGuire, fought in the Great War with the 20th Battalion, CEF. In spite of the elder McGuire's admonitions, Frank joined the local militia and fought bravely overseas with the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment in the Sicilian and Italian campaigns (1943-44). He volunteered not for adventure but because he strongly opposed Hitler and Naziism. He believed in democracy, freedom of expression and the equality of all people.

After the war, Frank resumed his studies at the University of Toronto, graduating with an Honours B.A in History. Upon receiving his commission he was assigned to the Directorate of History in Ottawa.

Posted to Korea during 1952-53, he served as historical officer of the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade Group. The army later published his booklet, *Canada's Army in Korea* which gave an objective summary of military operations.

Back in Canada at the Army Historical Section, Frank worked originally under Colonel C.P. Stacey helping to prepare massive amounts of records for use in the writing of the upcoming official histories.

Frank's assignment was to draft chapters for *The Canadians in Italy 1943-45*, *The Official History of the Canadian Army in Italy* (1956), under Colonel G.W.L. Nicholson. Frank's first-hand experience stood him in good stead in producing a clear and factual account of army operations. Next came *The Canadian Expeditionary Force, The Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War* (1962). This assignment was probably his greatest challenge at the Directorate of History. Previous efforts to produce a professional, official history of the First World War had been unsuccessful. Frank worked along side young historians such as Dr. Desmond Morton, Dr. R.H. Roy, Dr. A.M.J. Hyatt and many others.

While working on *The Canadian Expeditionary Force*, it was suggested that brief mention be made of Canada's war in the air. In drafting the material, he personally investigated the death of Baron Manfred von Richthofen, known as "the Red Baron", whose death has been credited to Captain Roy Brown of Carleton Place. Frank's investigations included reviewing medical reports and many other documents. Credit, he concluded, should go to Australians providing ground fire. This finding upset his superiors. Frank was accused of being anti-Canadian, but he stuck to his conclusion in spite of pressure. It would have been in his self-interest to go along with the Canadian nationalistic point of view, however, he believed in writing the historical

truth based on facts and evidence. Frank enjoyed correcting those who embellished history or who perpetuated myths without going back to original sources. For example, he could not accept some Canadian accounts of the history of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, April 1917, that exorcised any British contribution. When the official history of Canada's air contribution to the Great War was published, it was his version of Richthofen's death that was cited.

Frank's final official history was *Strange Battleground, Canada's Army in Korea* (1966) under Colonel H.F. Wood. Again, he did yeoman work and as part of a team, and had to go along with editorial decisions not always to his liking.

Shortly before unification, Frank retired from the Army. He then worked for several years at the Map Division of the National Archives, specializing in military maps. Frank moved on to the Canadian War Museum and worked on all aspects of displays, collection and particularly the Historical Publication Series.

In spite of favourable peer reviews, internal debates raged over whether to include this or that manuscript in the series. However, the series achieved critical success based on reviews as well as the financial success for the publisher and the Canadian taxpayer. Frank was best known in the military museum community as the editor of the *Organization of Military Museums of Canada (OMMC) Journal*.

After his public service retirement, Frank continued to devote time to a variety of projects, especially Richthofen. He travelled to Flanders, retracing the Red Baron's final flight from the air and the ground. Frank bore no grudges against those with whom he battled, whether on the battlefield, or in wars waged on paper over historical interpretation. In 2001, a lifetime of research culminated in the publishing of his book "The Many Deaths of the Red Baron".

Frank McGuire's interests were not restricted to Canadian military history. He contributed to the documentation of military music through reviews, contributions to text for record dust jackets and articles. He was a world-wide authority and collector specializing in the recordings and works of John Philip Sousa. As well Frank was a biblical scholar, questioning the authorship of Galatians attributed to St. Paul.

Frank enjoyed working in the field of Canadian history. He was a pioneer in the writing of official histories for the Department of National Defence. He lived through the evolution of history writing from amateur to the professional, from the purely factual to analysis and interpretation in Canadian official histories. Submitted by Roger McGuire

Written by *Fred Gaffen* and *Roger McGuire*, October, 2009

## GILLIAN ELIZABETH COVERNTON, 1978-2009



Photo courtesy of the Manitoba Government Employees Union

Gillian passed away unexpectedly on 15 May 2009 at the age of thirty. Gillian graduated with an M.A. in history from the University of Manitoba in 2004. As a graduate student Gillian was one of the founders of the Fort Garry Lectures in History, the annual graduate student conference. Her M.A. thesis examined the history of Masonry in Red River, and served as the basis for her 2005 article in *Manitoba History*. Gillian also served as Gazette Editor for *Manitoba History* in 2004 and 2005. After completing her M.A. Gillian began to work for the Superannuation Board of Manitoba and recently took a full time position with the Manitoba Government Employees Union. Gillian had planned to return to pursue doctoral studies in history. Her sudden and heartbreaking death is a loss not only for her family in Winnipeg but for the historical community in Manitoba and Canada.

*Adele Perry* with the assistance of  
*Debbie Covernton*.

---

## 2010 CHA Prize Announcement / Annonce des prix 2010 de la SHC

We are pleased to announce that the competition for the 2010 CHA Prizes is now open:

**François-Xavier Garneau Medal** - awarded every five years, is the most prestigious of the CHA prizes. It honours an outstanding Canadian contribution to historical research.

**John A. Macdonald Prize** - awarded annually to the best book in Canadian history.

**Wallace K. Ferguson Prize** - awarded annually to the best book in history other than Canadian.

Please contact the committee chair, John Lutz, at [jlutz@uvic.ca](mailto:jlutz@uvic.ca) or visit our website at [www.cha-shc.ca](http://www.cha-shc.ca) for more details.

For the:

**John Bullen Prize** – awarded annually to the outstanding Ph.D. thesis on a historical topic submitted in a Canadian university by a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

**Clio Awards** - awarded to meritorious publications or for exceptional contributions by individuals or organizations to regional history.

Please contact the Committee Chair, Jerry Bannister, at [jerry.bannister@dal.ca](mailto:jerry.bannister@dal.ca) or visit our website at [www.cha-shc.ca](http://www.cha-shc.ca) for more details.

C'est avec plaisir que nous annonçons le lancement du concours des prix de la SHC 2010 :

La **Médaille François-Xavier-Garneau** - attribuée à tous les cinq ans, est le plus prestigieux de ces prix. Cette médaille honore une contribution canadienne remarquable à la recherche historique.

Le **Prix John A. Macdonald** - accordé annuellement au meilleur livre en histoire canadienne.

Le **Prix Wallace K. Ferguson** - décerné annuellement au meilleur livre en histoire non canadienne.

Veillez communiquer avec John Lutz, le responsable du comité, à [jlutz@uvic.ca](mailto:jlutz@uvic.ca) ou consultez notre site Web [www.cha-shc.ca](http://www.cha-shc.ca) pour de plus amples informations.

Pour les prix :

**John Bullen** - accordé à la meilleure thèse de doctorat complétée dans une université canadienne et portant sur tout domaine de spécialisation en histoire.

**Les Prix Clio** – accordés aux meilleurs livres en histoire régionale, ainsi qu'aux individus ou aux sociétés historiques qui ont fait des contributions importantes à l'histoire locale ou régionale.

Veillez communiquer avec le responsable du comité, Jerry Bannister, à [jerry.bannister@dal.ca](mailto:jerry.bannister@dal.ca) ou consultez notre site Web au [www.cha-shc.ca](http://www.cha-shc.ca) pour de plus amples informations.