Happy Valentine's Day! *courtesy of G. Chaucer?*
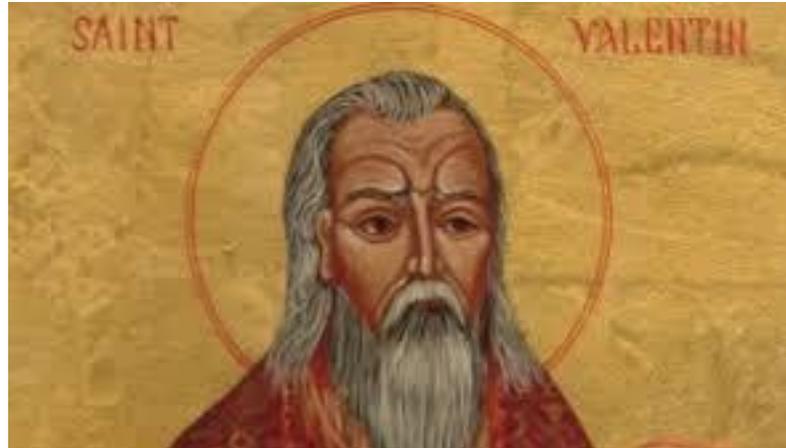
The medieval English poet Geoffrey Chaucer often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. No record exists of romantic celebrations on Valentine's Day prior to a poem Chaucer wrote around 1375. In his work "Parliament of Foules," he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day–an association that didn't exist until after his poem received widespread attention. The poem refers to February 14 as the day birds (and humans) come together to find a mate.

When Chaucer wrote, "For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day / Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate", he may have invented the holiday we know today.

Doubt thou the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move.
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.

William Shakespeare

Up the Argylls!

Some Frasers have been fortunate enough to visit the regimental museum in Stirling Castle – an amazing regimental history!

The **Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)** was a line infantry regiment of the British Army that existed from 1881 until amalgamation into the Royal Regiment of Scotland on 28 March 2006, from when it became a single battalion in the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

The regiment was created under the Childers Reforms in 1881, as the **Princess Louise's (Sutherland and Argyll Highlanders)**, by the amalgamation of the 91st (Argyllshire Highlanders) Regiment of Foot and 93rd (Sutherland Highlanders) Regiment of Foot, amended the following year to reverse the order of the "Argyll" and "Sutherland" sub-titles.[1] The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was expanded to fifteen battalions during the First World War (1914–1918) and nine during the Second World War (1939–1945). The 1st Battalion served in the 1st Commonwealth Division in the Korean War and gained a high public profile for its role in Aden during 1967.

As part of the restructuring of the British Army's infantry in 2006, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were amalgamated with the Royal Scots, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, the Royal Highland Fusiliers (Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment), the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) and the Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons) into the seven battalion strong Royal Regiment of Scotland. Following a further round of defence cuts announced in July 2012 the 5th Battalion was reduced to a single public duties company called Balaklava Company, 5th Battalion, Royal Regiment of Scotland, (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders).

The Thin Red Line – 93rd at Balaclava

"The Battle of the Atlantic *was the dominating factor all through the war. Never for one moment could we forget that everything happening elsewhere, on land at sea or in the air, depended ultimately on its outcome."—Winston Churchill*

The name "Battle of the Atlantic" was coined by Winston Churchill in February 1941. It has been called the "longest, largest and most complex" naval battle in history. It involved thousands of ships in more than 100 convoy battles and perhaps 1,000 single-ship encounters, in a theatre covering millions of square miles of ocean. The situation changed constantly, with one side or the other gaining advantage, as participating countries surrendered, joined and even changed sides in the war, and as new weapons, tactics, counter-measures and equipment were developed by both sides. The Allies gradually gained the upper hand, overcoming German surface raiders by the end of 1942 and defeating the U-boats by mid-1943, though losses due to U-boats continued until war's end. (Source Wikipedia)

The Battle of the Atlantic began on September 3 1939 and lasted until VE Day, May 8 1945, in total five years eight months and five days.

The allied war dead of naval and merchant seaman is estimated at more than 20,000 from Canada, USA, India, China, Poland, Norway, Holland, Greece, Belgium, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Russia. In total around 3,500 merchant ships were sunk and 15 million tons of allied shipping was lost. Many thousands of civilians were also caught in bombing raids at ports and shipyards on both sides of the Atlantic. In Liverpool, for example, the 'May blitz' of 1941 saw 1,746 Merseysiders killed and 1,154 injured in eight nights of bombing.

The U-Boat memorial near Kiel has the names of 28,000 crewmen who died, more than 60 percent of those who served. Of the 859 U-boats, 648 were lost across all seas in which U-Boats operated. (Statistics from Royal Navy Historical Branch and Battle of the Atlantic, Andrew Williams, BBC books.)

The Battle of the Atlantic's core was the Allied naval blockade of Germany, announced the day after the declaration of war, and Germany's subsequent counter-blockade. It was at its height from mid-1940 through to the end of 1943. The Battle of the Atlantic pitted U-boats and other warships of the Kriegsmarine and aircraft of the Luftwaffe against the Royal Navy, Royal Canadian Navy, United States Navy and Allied merchant shipping. The convoys, coming mainly from North America and predominantly going to the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, were protected for the most part by the British and Canadian navies and air forces. These forces were aided by ships and aircraft of the United States beginning September 13, 1941.

The Germans were joined by submarines of the Italian Royal Navy (Regia Marina) after their Axis ally Italy entered the war on June 10, 1940.

The final victory in the Atlantic was assured by the American entry to the war. The USA was able to bring overwhelming military and industrial muscle to the campaign.

The Battle of the Atlantic:

Canada played a key role, by the end of the war it had more than 400 ships, almost half the North Atlantic escort force, an extraordinary contribution from a country that could only boast six warships in 1939. In total, 1,600 Merchant Navy personnel from Canada and Newfoundland were killed. One out of every seven Merchant Navy sailors who served was killed or wounded.

The RCN and RCAF paid a high toll in the Battle of the Atlantic. Most of the 2,000 RCN officers and men who died during the war were killed during the Battle of the Atlantic, as were 752 members of the RCAF

In 2013 Battle of the Atlantic events were staged in Liverpool, Londonderry and London to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Battle. The Ministry of Defence made clear those events would be the final official commemoration of the BOA, hence the need for a permanent memorial.

The campaign to build a £2.5m memorial to the Battle of the Atlantic on Liverpool's iconic waterfront is planning an awareness raising tour of America.

"Parati Vero Parati"
"Ready Aye Ready"

Bless 'em all!

"Per Adua ad Astra"
"Through Adversity to the Stars"

The Recovery of Newfoundland: (Battle of Signal Hill)
from *The Fraser Highlanders* – J.R. Harper, 1995

In July 1762, the French, who had long wanted to gain control of the fishing grounds, landed in Newfoundland and occupied St. John's.
Colonel William Amherst was ordered to raise a force from troops available in New York and in Nova Scotia to clear the French out of Newfoundland.
Among the troops in this expedition were two companies of 78th Fraser Highlanders stationed in Nova Scotia, two companies of Montgomerie Highlanders detached from New York to deal with the Indians, the flank companies of the Royals from Halifax with a detachment of the 45th Foot, and a small party of Provincials.
This little expedition sailed from Halifax and landed on the Newfoundland coast seven miles North of St. John's on 12 September 1762. Led by the Fraser Highlanders, they marched to St. John's and besieged the town, which capitulated on 17 September without a cannon being fired.
The Union flag was raised over Citadel Hill.
The French prisoners taken on this occasion were more numerous than the victors.

Among the Fraser Highlanders, Captain Charles Macdonell of Glengarry was mortally wounded, three rank-and-file were killed and seven wounded.
Montgomerie Highlanders lost one officer, and four privates were killed and two wounded.

At dawn on September 15, 1762, Royal Navy warships anchored behind the steep hill, with masts out of view of the French. British troops then scaled the cliff side onto the hill itself. The surprise was total, and the engagement was brief but fatal. The commander of the French detachment, Guillaume de Bellecombe, was seriously wounded. On the British side, a bullet shattered the legs of one of Amherst's officers, MacDonell. The French withdrew to the fort. The British began painstakingly bringing artillery pieces up the cliff and constructed small batteries which they proceeded to use to bombard the fort until the French capitulated.

Not to be missed:

- Visit www.fortfrasergarrison.com and review all the tabs – great photos in "Gallery"

- 15 FD & 78th Frasers Whisky Fundraiser Evening: 02 Mar
- AGM Lunch: **17 Mar** (Amiens 1918 theme)
- Ste Foy Dinner: 21 Apr
- Victoria Highland Games: 19/20 May (In Victoria)
- Siege of Louisbourg BBQ at OC's residence Sunday: 03 Jun
- BC Highland Games: 16/17 June (In Coquitlam)
- Plains of Abraham Dinner: 22 Sep
- Feast of Saint Andrew Dinner: 24 Nov

(All events at 15th Field Officers Mess, Bessborough Armoury, 2025 W 11th Ave., unless otherwise noted)

Be kind to one another, its Valentine's Day!