

THE 24TH MILITARY HISTORY COLLOQUIUM
SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

2–5 MAY 2013

Small Projects Grant Report for THEN / HiER

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Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies

THE LAURIER CENTRE FOR MILITARY STRATEGIC AND DISARMAMENT STUDIES

The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies (LCMSDS) was founded in 1991 to foster research, education, and discussion of historical and contemporary conflict. The goal of LCMSDS remains to be Canada's leading research/education institution promoting an open forum to discuss historical and contemporary conflict. Current methods used to achieve this include, but are not limited to: public lectures, conferences and workshops, student volunteer opportunities, battlefield tours for students and educators, publications and the quarterly journal *Canadian Military History*, and the creation of battlefield guidebooks. The director of LCMSDS is [Terry Copp](#), a Professor Emeritus and esteemed military historian who teaches numerous courses in the History Department at Wilfrid Laurier University. In recent years the Centre has expanded its public outreach online through its website www.canadianmilitaryhistory.ca, which includes regular blog series, announcements about LCMSDS initiatives and events, and other resources of value to scholars and educators. The Centre has also launched a new digital archive for researchers and enthusiasts alike, the Laurier Military History Archive (www.lmharchive.ca).

THE SMALL PROJECTS GRANT & THE 24TH MILITARY HISTORY COLLOQUIUM

The Military History Colloquium is an annual gathering of established scholars, graduate students, educators, and members of the general who share a passion for military history and related fields of historical inquiry. The Colloquium was established in the mid-1990s (originally held semi-annually) and has since continued as a successful platform for promoting scholarly discussion of military history research and education.

From 2–5 May 2013, LCMSDS hosted the 24th Military History Colloquium at Wilfrid Laurier University. Working in partnership with the Canadian Nautical Research Society, this was the largest Colloquium in recent history with approximately 150 delegates. Highlights included a keynote address from Dr. Roger Sarty (“Getting Started: How the Pioneers of Academic Military History in Canada Got into the Game”), as well as plenary lectures by Terry Copp (“Educating Everyman’s Memory: Historians and Public Commemoration”) and the former head of Library and Archives Canada, Daniel J. Caron (“Challenges of the Digital Age: A New Choreography for Building Archives”). The colloquium also featured the release of LCMSDS Press’ latest battlefield guidebook, *1812: A Guide to the War and its Legacy*, authored by Terry Copp and four student employees of the Centre.

The Small Projects Grant provided by THEN/HiER allowed LCMSDS to create the Military History Podcast Series, which showcases selected presentations from the 24th Military History Colloquium. The grant enabled LCMSDS to purchase two audio recording devices which student volunteers used to record the podcasts while simultaneously acting as abstractors, taking detailed notes on session highlights. Additional grant money was used to hire a student to edit the audio files for sound clarity. The podcasts are posted regularly on www.canadianmilitaryhistory.ca, and will soon include presentations from the 25th Military History Colloquium (9-10 May 2014).

THE SMALL PROJECTS GRANT & THE “SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING” WORKSHOP

The Small Projects Grant provided by THEN/HiER was also used to host a ‘Spotlight on Teaching’ workshop on the final day of the Colloquium (5 May 2013) titled “From Theory to Practice: Engaging Meaningful Historical Inquiry and Pedagogical Debates on War and Society in the Classroom from the Elementary Post-Graduate Education.” The highlight of the daylong event made possible by the grant was a guest lecture Jill Colyer, the national coordinator of the Historical Thinking Project.

Attendees to the two-part workshop included over thirty primary and secondary school teachers from across the country in addition to aspiring teachers, undergraduate/graduate students, and two museum curators from Caen, France. The first session was titled “Toward A National Association of Social Studies Teachers.” Led by Canadian educators Blake Seward, Matt Symes, and Jill Colyer, attendees worked in small groups to discuss and debate issues related to the importance of teaching history, the utility of historical study, methods for teaching history, and ways to encourage further growth of the discipline.

Jill Colyer followed the workshop with a session titled “Workshop on the Future of History Teaching in Canada” based on her association with the Historical Thinking Project. This national initiative aims to foster historical thinking in young people through a three-pronged approach involving adjusting provincial curriculum guidelines, influencing major educational publishers, and holding large-scale professional development seminars with educators and administrators. The thought-provoking presentation was well received and prompted much discussion during the question period.

The impact of the one-day workshop and other concurrent ‘Spotlight on Teaching’ sessions that were part of the regular Colloquium program has been substantial. In cooperation with its partner organization, the [Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society](#), LCMSDS has been able to attract increasing interest to its [annual high school history teachers’ battlefield tour](#). The workshop also helped spread interest in two related education associations: the [Association of Canadian Military History Teachers](#) and the [Teachers’ Network for the Study of War & the Canadian Experience](#).

