



**AIRBORNE SOCIAL CLUB
NORTHTOWN PO, BOX 71034
9308 - 137 AVENUE
EDMONTON, ALBERTA T5E 6J8
OCTOBER 2020**



Friendship is like peeing your pants, everyone can see it, but only you can feel the true warmth.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

This year, 2020 will go down in history as one, which we all hope and pray will not be repeated in 2021. Stop for a second and think, how many of us thought we would be wearing a mask or face shield as we are doing today. Regardless of where we may live, how old we are or what we may be doing in life, this pandemic has kicked us in the ass, hard. I do not know about others but I know that washing my hands has taken on much more of a ritual.

I think back about the many times we sat on the ground, opened a ration pack and began eating without first washing our hands and shared a mess tin or coffee cup without ever thinking about germs or viruses we may be transmitting or have transmitted. Those days are over for good and I am not so sure that is such a good thing. We humans are socialites and require those interpersonal relationships that this COVID may be changing forever. One thing for sure this COVID cannot change our comradeship and care for each other.

I do not know how many calls, texts or emails I have received over the past months asking about the welfare of our brotherhood in hopes we all remain in good health. I am so thankful to report there is only one known COVID case from within our ranks.

Eric Manchester penned his tongue in cheek reasons for being thankful....

I am thankful for:

- Family who love me (or, at least tolerate me most of the time).
- Friends who still want to be so.
- The privilege of serving my country (and the comrades with whom I did).
- What's left of my memory.*
- Still having most of my original parts.
- What's left of my memory.*
- A state of health that is still mostly in some state.
- What's left of my memory.*
- Living in a place that is mainly peaceful.

AND, ESPECIALLY FOR

Our collective efforts to stay connected through the years and miles.

Ubique! Ex Coelis! - Eric Manchester

Being the resilient people we are, we will get through this and come out at the other end much stronger and wiser than we were before this began.



LAST POST

This edition may have missed notices of airborne comrades who passed since last publication. We try to acknowledge all those who have passed on regretfully, though full details are not always known or available at time of publication.

ROBERT (BOB) KOVACS - EDMONTON



Bob passed away on August 15th, 2020 after slipping in his bathtub, hitting his head. Bob was rushed to hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries. Keeping with Bob's wishes no funeral or memorial services were held. Rest in peace our brother!

JOHN FREDRICK HISSON 1946 - 2020



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the peaceful passing of John Fredrick Hisson on September 18th, 2020 at the age of 73. John was born in Toronto, where he resided until May 1963 when 16 year old he answered the call to serve his country under the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC) Soldier

Apprentice Plan. During his time with the Canadian Armed Forces he served in the RCASC in Borden, CFB Shilo, two - 6 month tours of Cyprus, Germany, Ottawa, CFS Alert for 6 months, CFB Edmonton with the Canadian Airborne Regiment, CFS Goose Bay, CFB Toronto and Bosnia for 7 1/2 months. John is survived by his loving wife, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, sisters, brothers, aunt,

nieces and nephews and friends alike. He will never be forgotten.

In keeping with John's wishes and due to COVID restrictions, a private family Celebration of Life was held, September 26th, 2020 which several of his airborne brothers attended.

JAMES MALCOLM LAWRENCE "SMOKEY" TOMKINS



With heavy hearts the family of Smokey Tomkins of Westlock, AB announces his passing on August 29, 2020. Smokey is survived by his children; Smokey Jr. Sheila, Franz-Josef (Nicole), Sharon (Damond), Sandra (Norman), Lisa (Harold); stepchildren; Maria (Ghislain) and Ashley (Toby); grandchildren; Dwayne, Shari, Anna, T.J.

Will, Julia, Michelle, Michael, Preston, and Spencer; step-grandchildren; Riley, Wesley, and Felix; great-grandchildren; Mackenzie, Mathison, Teigan, and Devin; one sister, Lee; numerous other relatives and friends. Predeceased by wife and mother of his children; Linda; wife Patsy; parents, Peter and Isabella; nineteen siblings.

A Celebration of Life Service was held Friday, Sept. 11th, 2020 at the Royal Canadian Legion Br. #97, Westlock, with Pastor Marjorie Steele officiating. Smokey's wish was to be cremated and his wife and children are respecting his wishes. A Celebration of Life Service will be held in the summer of 2021 in Joussard, AB with the date to be announced when determined.

The following has been taken from a message originated by MGen (Ret'd) Walter Holmes

A small group of Kingstonians, all of whom served with the Canadian Airborne Regiment, either in Cyprus or Edmonton in 1974, have commenced the process of organizing a return to Cyprus battlefield tour in 2024, the 50th Anniversary of the deployment. I have been asked to distribute the committee's first communique to as wide an Airborne audience as possible.

The communique directs those who may be interested to sign up to the Cyprus 2024 Facebook page. It is hoped we reach as many of those who served in the Regiment at the time as possible. Airborne! Walter

50TH ANNIVERSARY RETURN TO CYPRUS 2024

Commémoration du 50e anniversaire de la guerre de Chypre 1974 (Communiqué #1)



La planification a débuté pour commémorer la mission de Chypre, en y revenant en 2024 pour des visites du champ de bataille, des présentations et des mémoires personnelles...avec en option une croisière en Méditerranée. Ce voyage complétera la 55e réunion du Régiment aéroporté 2023 et le 80e anniversaire du Jour-J 2024.

Pour les voyageurs plus âgés, et à un coût raisonnable, la visite s'adresse à tous les anciens combattants aéroportés - en particulier ceux qui servaient ou étaient attachés au Régiment (arrière-groupe ou déployés) en 1974 - ainsi que les familles, amis et parachutistes en service. L'objectif est de partager des souvenirs et de capter des histoires pour enrichir l'histoire officielle.

Le comité procède à des vérifications initiales, mais a besoin de votre 'pouce en l'air', de vos suggestions et de votre aide pour planifier!

Rejoignez le groupe Facebook 'Cyprus2024', partagez vos idées et vos souvenirs, faites passer le mot, c'est...Feu vert...GO!

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Commemoration of 50th Anniversary Cyprus 1974 War (Communiqué #1)



Planning has started to commemorate the Cyprus mission, by returning in 2024 for battlefield visits, presentations and personal accounts...with an optional Mediterranean cruise. This trip will complement the 55th Airborne Reunion 2023 and D-Day 80th Anniversary 2024.

For older travellers, and at reasonable cost, the tour is aimed at all Airborne veterans – especially those serving or attached with the Regiment (rear party or deployed) in 1974 – plus families, friends and serving jumpers. The goal is to share memories and capture stories to augment the official history.

The Committee is doing initial checks, but needs your 'thumbs up', any suggestions and help in planning!

Join 'Cyprus2024' Facebook Group, share your ideas and memories, spread the word, it's... 'Green light...GO!

Subsequent to Walter's contact, I received a text originated from John Page, President Canadian Forces Logistics Association who has put the call out to all Loggies who may be interested in Cyprus2024. Check out the Association website, Facebook and other links pertaining the Cyprus 2024.

Kit Shop

Kit shop and other related airborne items; prints, books and items are available through Bill Dickson. Bill has a special commemorative coin which was minted to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Dedication of the 1CAN PARA Memorial Cairn (Airborne Monument) located at Siffleur Falls Alberta.



There is a limited number of coins for sale, so purchase is on first come basis. Costs for coin \$20 a piece or \$25 shipment by postal. Purchase of

coins through Bill Dickson only at (780) 459-0947 / abn339@shaw.ca

20TH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF THE DEDICATION - 1CAN PARA CAIRN.

Over the past 20 years that we have had ceremonies at the 1CAN PARA, Cairn and the always-constant concern about weather conditions for the ceremony. I am not a climatologist but there must be some anomaly about the area; I think those of you who have participated at events over the years can attest to this fact. It can be pouring down raining at the David Thompson Resort (DTR) and 20kms down the road at the Cairn it is sunny, or vice-a-versa. September the 8th, 2020 was no different.

On the drive to the area on the 7th, it was a mix of rain, sun and sleet all the way to west of Rocky Mountain House. The only good thing about the drive was all the motorhomes and trailers were heading east, for a change. After checking into the campsite at the DTR, I headed out to the Siffleur Falls Staging Area to check out the parking area and to meet with Alberta Parks Staff who were programmed to ensure the parade area would be clear for the ceremony on the 8th. There were still a lot of cars in the parking area but being Labour Day Monday, visitors cleared out slowly. As they did, the Parks Staff set up barriers to confirm the space we needed. I noticed it was snowing on the mountains and Mt. Ex Coelis did not look that good, especially for tomorrow's scheduled climb. It was rather cold too, and I had to wonder what the night would bring.



The morning of the 8th was a chilly one and very cloudy; a priority for a campfire. I drove to the Cairn after breakfast to meet the climb team and to ensure the Parks personnel's efforts were not destroyed; all I needed was for someone to disregard the barriers and park in front of the Cairn. Wonderful, everything was okay and with a Parks member on site. The space was now reserved for the ceremony, perfect.

Shortly after, our padre, LCol (Ret'd) Dave Prowse arrived from Jasper, followed a bit later by Todd Gow and the Carter family members. The climb team consisting of WO Berggren, Cpl Chakrabarti and Pte May, from Mtn Coy 3 Bn PPCLI arrived on schedule from Edmonton. After a few introductions and a short briefing on the planned events, Padre Prowse conducted a short blessing of the ashes. The climb team collected the containers and urns and headed out to ascend Normandy Peak. It was 1030 hours on the 8th of September 2020 and yesterday's snow on Mt Ex Coelis had all melted.

It was time to start setting up for the event, so we got the wreaths out and waited for the DTR staff to arrive with the flagpoles and chairs, this they have always done in support of our ceremonies, which is an absolute plus for us. Bill Johnston arrived around noon with the sound system and guess what; it was starting to clear up. Patches of blue sky were starting to appear in the west. It was still cold; but remember what I said about that anomaly.

It did not take long and soon we had numerous guests and members arriving for the event. As we approached the start time for the parade, a few of us were still trying to get the sound system to work. Sgt (Ret'd) Art Brochu formed up the parade and CWO (Ret'd) Tim Penney got the Colour Party lined up. Maj (Ret'd) Claude Villeneuve, and civilian Brian Mason in their WWII, 1CAN PARA and FSSF re-enactment uniforms took post at the Cairn. It was time to go and we had no bloody sound system, yet. Just as I started to let everyone know they would have to listen to my squeaky voice, unenhanced by volume, my son-in-law, Simon Rozendaal shoved the microphone in my hand and we were good to go with sound. Yeah,

the skies had cleared and the sun was out in full force now too.

Over the years, our program and parade format has not changed much. What changed this year was the attendance line up; given the circumstances of the pandemic, it was incredible. Once acknowledging we were on Treaty 6 and 8 Territory Land, our 1CAN PARA BN veteran Lou Lamy took the General Salute, as Bugler Todd Gow played the National Anthem. Padre Dave Prowse gave the invocation and MWO (Ret'd) Ed Haines read out the Airborne Prayer. I acknowledge the message from the Lt-Gov of Alberta, Her Honour, the Honourable Salma Lakhani, who so graciously sent greetings, which we entered into our program. Then, as a new format in the tribute readings I decided to do a roll call of the Guardians of the Mountain; 39 names long and included those who went up Normandy Peak today, Capt Gord Carter, CWO Art Chase, MWO Bert Reed, and Sgt Neil Gow. May they Rest in Peace.

Support from our Regular Force military personnel has always been an important factor in our ceremonies at Siffleur. It was a special honour this time as we not only had the Climb Team on site, already ascending Normandy Peak we also had members from Para Coy, 3rd Bn PPCLI join the parade under command of Maj Summerfield and MWO Farrell. To top off this year's support, BGen WH Fletcher, Commander 3rd Cdn Division and Task Force (West), honoured us with his attendance. His tributes highlighted why he too became a parachutist.

It was a pleasure to again have Norm Toseland's daughters, Lynn Robb and Gerry Greschner join us. Norm, a 1CAN PARA veteran named the mountain and peaks, and then started the project to build the Cairn. Gerry spoke of her father's journey after the war to find a mountain in the Canadian Rockies in memory of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion. His success unfortunately was only partial, as he passed before the Cairn was completed. Norm Toseland had parachuted into Normandy in the early hours of June 6th, 1944 and was wounded on June 10th, 1944.

Then it was the Last Post, Two Minutes Silence, Lament and Reveille. The echo of the Todd Gow's bugle and the pipes played by MWO (Ret'd) Colin (spot) Norris, in this area, always causes a tingling feeling in ones being - that mixed with a feeling of pride! Colour Party Commander CWO (Ret'd) Tim Perry read Binyon's Verse, which was our cue to start the wreath placements. Led by BGen Fletcher, wreaths were placed in honour from Canada, Veterans Affairs, Province of Alberta and then the airborne world. Bob Spisak, son of 1CAN PARA Veteran placed the 6th Airborne Division (UK). Isobel Allan, 1CAN PARA veteran widow and Lou Lamy, WW II 1CAN PARA veteran placed the wreath on behalf of the 1CAN PARA, followed by MWO (Ret'd) Ed Haines with the Aboriginal Veterans of Alberta wreath, Bob

Copeland on behalf of 2/75th US Rangers and Al Cameron on behalf of Veterans Voices of Canada. All were escorted by members of Para Coy, 3rd Bn PPCLI, who I am sure considered this an honour, and not a task!

As we continued to add new quirks to our ceremonies, it was time to embarrass Isobel Allan, widow of 1CAN PARA veteran Hector (Huck) Allan by having the parade sing Happy Birthday in honour of her 90th birthday.



Isobel has attended this D-Day ceremony for years, and was present at the original dedication of the Cairn in 2000. Her presence, along with that of WW II 1CAN PARA vet Lou Lamy emphasizes and embodies the true spirit of the Airborne family.

It was difficult to make the closing remarks this time; who do I thank? We were so lucky in every way with this ceremony. Blessed with weather, support from Alberta Environment and Parks; a turnout of members and guests from the Airborne Social Club (Edmonton), the Veterans Paratroopers Motorcycle Club, the Royal Canadian Legion reps and a contingent of soldiers from the 3rd Bn PPCLI. Being honoured by our new Division Commander and having one of the last remaining WW II 1CAN PARA veterans on parade - who could ask for more.

Those who contributed (that I have not mentioned already) know it and I thank you for your attendance and support. All that was left to do after the parade dismissal was to take the ceremony group photograph, engineered as always by our dedicated and talented club photographer, Dave Paris. To coin another phrase Dave...you done good! And then it was over.

Our COVID sign-in list had 107 signatures on it. Considering the current situation, that is a damn good turnout for an event held in the boon docks about 150 kms from nowhere! As I have not received any calls from AHS, I assume everyone made it home

safely, and continue to remain in good health. May we all remain that way until we meet again!

As an addendum to this dissertation, after the ceremony I returned to the DTR campsite for some relaxation and therapy. About 2015 hrs WO Berggren and the Climb Team members showed up at the camp site and debriefed me on the climb. It was a success. They made it to the top of Normandy Peak and conducted the ceremony of dispersing the ashes of our four guardians. As a unique touch, they had brought a small rock from atop the mountain for each one of the family members to have as a tribute to their loved ones. An outstanding gesture and a first at that! This debrief enabled me to pass on the information to the families of those who were taken to the mountain as guardians, which I have since done, along with a picture from the top and a rock for each of them.



In closing, I want to echo WWII 1CAN PARA veteran Lou Lamy's departing words to me as we left... "I'll see you next year Bill".

Airborne soldiers, veterans and families all, June 6th, 2021 is on the horizon, you know what to do.

Capt (Ret'd) Bill Dickson, CD
Coord/MC 20th Anniversary Dedication Ceremony
Siffleur Falls Staging Area, AB

77th Anniversary D-Day Ceremony June 5-7, 2021 Siffleur Falls Alberta

In the hope that the current pandemic situation will change by next year, the David Thompson Resort (DTR) has committed to open for the 2021 season. Accordingly, I have arranged with DTR for us to again hold the subject ceremony thru the period June 5-7, 2021 at their facilities.

The following are cost arrangement settled on for the 2021 season for the Airborne community.

Rooms are \$139/night plus tax for a total of \$155.68/night. This rate is based on a 2-night stay. So, with meals (not including lunch on the 6th June) for two guests for the 2-night stay, the package as follows:

The room is \$311.36 and meals for two would be \$232.20 for a total of \$543.56

The rates for the campground sites are \$36.75/night plus tax \$39.69

The Meet & Greet will take place on the evening of June 5th and the BBQ will take place on the evening of June 6th, with both events taking place in the Bubble Tent, as in previous occasions.

The DTR has placed a block-booking period for the Airborne until May 5th, 2021. After which there is no guarantee, and you are on your own to book accommodation, if available.

Reservations may begin anytime through:
booking@davidthompsonresort.com or the website:
www.davidthompsonresort.com.

The Group code to use: **AIR21** and should be identified in the Special Request Section. The DTR phone lines will reopen on April 1st, 2021. To make reservations **1-403-721-2103 (or) 1-888-810-2103**.

Obviously, with the current situation still in a state of uncertainty, any plan we put forward could change by next year. That said, I think it is still important to go ahead with a plan to hold this ceremony in 2021. If the winds of change come up and we get a "Stop Drop"...so be it, in the meantime, I encourage the membership to get behind this plan and make your bookings. The dates never change for this event, so there is no excuse not to make long-term plans. The recent 20th Anniversary Ceremony of the Dedication of the 1st Canadian Parachute Bn Cairn was a huge success. We need to ensure we do not let those Airborne brothers and sisters, who went before us, down by making the 77th Anniversary Ceremony of D-Day a success too!

Capt (Ret'd) Bill Dickson, CD
Coord 2021 D-Day Ceremony/
780-893-1789 / abn339@shaw.ca

TRIBUTE TO SMOKEY TOMPKINS

The following is reprinted with permission and credits to Carol Christian, and to Your McMurray Magazine.



EDUCATION

That's the simple one word reply James Tomkins, better known as Smokey, has when asked what advice he would give to young people starting out today.

When Tomkins was starting out on his colourful life, he admits school wasn't that important, often skipping it.

The youngest of 21 children, Tomkins grew up in Grouard, a small hamlet in northern Alberta within Big Lakes County.

"My mother always had a sewing machine and I was always playing on it. My dad was always away, he was a supervisor with the Métis Nation of Alberta in those days and I would skip school. My mother spent 16 years in school and all she learned was the Latin prayers so school was not important."

When he was a teenager an older brother Frank, worked as a smokejumper. Tomkins remembers quizzing Frank about his day asking, "How does it feel? What do you do? Were you scared?" He said, "Would you like to be a smokejumper?" And I said, "Sure I would. It's an adventure." "So I joined the smokejumpers."

He lied about his age to get in because jumpers had to be at least 18. It was April 1953 and Tomkins was 17.

Based out of Lac la Ronge, Saskatchewan, Tomkins enjoyed his time parachuting into forest fires. "I only made two fire jumps, but I made 22 parachute jumps altogether. Lots of times, you could land near the fire rather than jump into the fire. We would fly overhead to take a look then land by the lake and walk in to put that sucker out." Working as a smoke jumper for two summers, hence the nickname Smokey, Tomkins joined the Canadian Forces on September 8, 1954, originally joining to learn how to be a parachute rigger. "I loved it, especially the maintenance part."

The plan was that after three years, he'd have his trade and go back smoke jumping, but life had a different plan.

In his second term in the army, he fell in love with Linda whom he met through a blind date. She was the first of three loves Tomkins has had in his life.

Economics dictated he remain in the forces. "I had the best deal of my life with her. "We were married for 17 years, but I was still a kid." He was married to Claire for another 17 years. His next love was Patsy.

Tomkins has five children: Lisa and Sandra who live in Fort McMurray plus Sharon and Sheila. Son James lives with Tomkins as his helper.

With no education, "I bluffed my way through the army. I even went to the air supply school. That's where you load these big air crafts to parachute out of."

The best tool of his trade was a slide rule. "You had to measure how much fuel was in the plane, how far you're going, how big a load, how many personnel and the weight. So then you'd know where the centre of gravity was to put the load into the aircraft. Not too far forward, not too far back."

At one point during his military career, he was in Germany. "When the war was over, the Allies had an Occupational Force there in case these guys were to rise up again. After a while, the threat was Communism so they wanted to have a force ready there. Germany was sort of a buffer so they wanted to keep troops handy."

Back on Canadian soil, he remembers that in 1970 there was going to be a world freefall competition and Canada wanted to enter a team. "We didn't have any skydivers in the army, but we had people like me who were jumping from individual clubs and so they called us together. There was 20 of us and they brought us into Edmonton and we were going to train for this competition. I wouldn't have made it because I wasn't a good jumper. I jumped because I just liked to fly."



However, he would never know if he'd make it as he shattered his ankle on one jump and that was it. He had 356 jumps during his years in the army.

While he was listening to the interns and doctor discuss his injury, he realized that if he didn't have jumping or the army, he was in trouble without an education.

"The minute I got out of the hospital with crutches, I went to the Victoria Composite High School to register for night school in Edmonton." When he was tested to gauge his education level, he was told he was somewhere between Grade 0 and Grade 7. Because of that, he was told the school couldn't accept him.

"I said, 'You will accept me because I'm paying for it and I want to go to school.'

Well he said, 'You're wasting money.' "It's my money," was Tomkins' reply.

He recalls failing everything the first year, but after four tries, he finally earned his GED in 1975. He was just over 40.

His next step was to attend Keyano College to earn his business administration certificate. "After three years, I got a certificate. It's funny when you have that certificate, your wages just seem to shoot up," he mused.

When he left the Canadian Forces after 22 years, Tomkins found his way to Fort McMurray the first time in 1975, working for the Métis Nation of Alberta.

In 1977, he went to work at Syncrude Canada.

Tomkins recalls a tri party agreement between Syncrude, the federal government and local First Nations. Under the 10-year program, Indigenous peoples were trained and hired by Syncrude. "And that was my job. I was one of the recruiters."

Tomkins said he also taught cross-cultural awareness courses to Syncrude employees. "We had to tell these White people what makes the Indigenous tick and how you can accept them."

He figures word got around about these courses and he had an offer from a mining company in B.C. then it was off to Quebec City, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

He left Syncrude and said good-bye to Fort McMurray in 1985.

While teaching these courses across Canada, Tomkins recalls a federal government representative heard one of his sessions and "went back to Ottawa and says, 'You've got to hire that guy.'" "So, on January, 5 1985, I moved to Ottawa with a new job and I stayed there for 10 years. I retired in 1995."

Of all the milestones in Tomkins' life, there is one he is the most proud of: Feb. 4, 2018 marked the 50th anniversary since he's had a drink.

He will admit he was quite a drinker. "Alcohol had the best of me," he acknowledges. "I started to do crazy things and I said that's enough."

When Patsy passed away in 2004, the couple had been living out east. With nothing to hold him there, he started a trek west with the thought of ending up somewhere in B.C.

When he arrived in Fort McMurray to visit his daughters, he was told he was staying and Sharon moved him into a house she owned across from the Legion in Waterways.

He enjoyed the close proximity to the Legion; he's been a member since 1954 as he could ride his scooter to travel the short distance.



Tomkins called Waterways home until the May 2016 evacuation. Now Westlock is home for the 83-year-old.

A year before his retirement, Tomkins was told he had prostate cancer, but he didn't believe the doctor.

I don't know why. I just didn't believe him."

He went on living as usual and had no issues until this past August, when Tomkins admits he wasn't feeling too well. A visit to the doctor revealed the cancer had spread.

Visiting an oncologist, Tomkins was given a prescription for medical marijuana when he said he didn't have anything for pain.

He didn't want chemotherapy.

"I saw my wife (Patsy) in chemo and poor girl, she suffered." Besides, "they told me chemo won't help me. They told me radiation won't help me, but the doctor said, 'We'll give you some pills and you should live another three and a half years.'

"I was happy to hear that. That'll make me 87.

<https://www.yourmcmurraymagazine.com/download/magazine/2018-05/mobile/index.html#p=39>

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2020



LEST WE FORGET

As with virtually all activities, COVID-19 pandemic will effect Remembrance Day Ceremonies across the country. The Legion's National Committee has announced Ottawa's National Ceremony will be no exception. A scaled back ceremony is planned for Ottawa, which will not have a veteran's or Armed Forces parade and subdued ceremony at the National Memorial Site. Similarly, scaled back ceremonies will be organized by many Legion Branches across the country and subjected to regional COVID restrictions and safety.

The importance of paying homage at a live ceremony is considered without doubt paramount to those of us who have served. Because of so much regional uncertainty, the only way to confirm what is going on in your area is to contact your local Legion Branch for updated information as November 11th approaches.

If no organized ceremony is being held in your areas, taking a drive to a local cenotaph and paying your respects alone or with family, as many of us do on occasion, even though it may not be on the 11th, would continue to keep our promise of **LEST WE FORGET**.

As a hobbyist photographer while driving around the city or countryside when I come across a graveyard with a veteran's area or headstones I stop and walk the area and repeat the veteran's name on the headstone, if one is readable. Recently I came across RSM Buxton's gravestone.



For me it is a case of thinking maybe I have been the only person who has remembered this veteran for years. I think to myself, maybe someday the same will be done at my headstone.

UNDERSTANDING A MILITARY VETERAN

Contributed by Dan Fournier:

As a Veteran, I copied this, believing it to be a good read.

To understand a Military Veteran you must know:

We left home as teenagers or in our early twenties for an unknown adventure.

We loved our country enough to defend it and protect it with our own lives.

We said goodbye to friends and family and everything we knew.

We learned the basics and then we scattered in the wind to the far corners of the Earth.

We found new friends and new family.

We became brothers and sisters regardless of color, race or creed.

We had plenty of good times, and plenty of bad times.

We didn't get enough sleep.

We smoked and drank too much.

We picked up both good and bad habits.

We worked hard and played harder.

We didn't earn a great wage.

We experienced the happiness of mail call and the sadness of missing important events.

We didn't know when, or even if, we were ever going to see home again.

We grew up fast, and yet somehow, we never grew up at all.

We fought for our freedom, as well as the freedom of others.

Some of us saw actual combat, and some of us didn't.

Some of us saw the world, and some of us didn't.

Some of us dealt with physical warfare, most of us dealt with psychological warfare.

We have seen and experienced and dealt with things that we can't fully describe or explain, as not all of our sacrifices were physical.

We participated in time honoured ceremonies and rituals with each other, strengthening our bonds and camaraderie.

We counted on each other to get our job done and sometimes to survive it at all.

We have dealt with victory and tragedy.

We have celebrated and mourned.

We lost a few along the way.

When our adventure was over, some of us went back home, some of us started somewhere new and some of us never came home at all.

We have told amazing and hilarious stories of our exploits and adventures.

We share an unspoken bond with each other, that most people don't experience, and few will understand.

We speak highly of our own branch of service, and poke fun at the other branches.

We know however, that, if needed, we will be there for our brothers and sisters and stand together as one, in a heartbeat.

Being a Veteran is something that had to be earned, and it can never be taken away.

It has no monetary value, but at the same time it is a priceless gift.

People see a Veteran and they thank them for their service.

When we see each other, we give that little upwards head nod, or a slight smile, knowing that we have shared and experienced things that most people have not.

So, from myself to the rest of the veterans out there, I commend and thank you for all that you have done and sacrificed for your country.

Try to remember the good times and make peace with the bad times.

Share your stories.

But most importantly, stand tall and proud, for you have earned the right to be called a Veteran.

I'm A Veteran! I Would Do It All Over Again And Again!

While strolling a park in Kingston Ontario one day I noticed this squirrel paying his respects!



OBITUARY THE LATE MR. COMMON SENSE



Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: Knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; and maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6 year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a

teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get Parental consent to apply a Band-Aid to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason.

He is survived by his three stepbrother: I Know My Rights, Someone Else Is To Blame, and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.....Unknown!

HUMOUR CORNER

A man received the following text from his neighbour: I am so sorry Bob, I am riddled with guilt for what I have been doing I have to confess that I have been helping myself to your wife, day and night when you are not around, in fact more than you.

I do not get it at home, which is no excuse; I can no longer live with the guilt and I hope you will accept my sincerest apology with my promise that it will not ever happen again.

Bob in complete shock did not know what to do!

A few moments later, a second text came in: Damn spell check! I meant "**WI-FI**". Opsssss

Today's Short Reading From The Bible...

From the Book of Genesis: "And God promised men that good and obedient wives would be found in all corners of the earth." Then he made the earth round and He laughed and laughed and laughed.

Biker's Good Deed...A tough looking group of bikers were riding when they saw a girl about to jump off a bridge so they stop. The leader, a big burly man, gets off his bike and says, "What are you doing?"

"I'm going to commit suicide," she says.

While he did not want to appear insensitive, he said before you jump, why don't you give me a kiss?

So, she does and it was a long, deep lingering kiss.

When finished, the biker says, "Wow! That was the best kiss I have ever had. That's a real talent you are wasting. You could be famous! Why are you committing suicide?"

"Because my mommy and daddy does not like me dressing up like a girl!"

Disclaimer: As usual, all spelling and grammatical errors have been left in for the amusement of you, the reader



Bill Dickson begins ceremony as Family and Friends look on



Composite Guard with Colour Party



1CAN PARA Veteran, Lou Lamy takes the salute



3 Division Commander and RSM, BGen Fletcher and CWO Kiens salute during the playing of The Last Post



BGen Fletcher addresses the parade



**Gerry Geschner talks of her father's efforts
is getting the mountain range named**



Wreath preparation



**1CAN PARA Vet Lou Lamy and Widow Isobel Allan
escorted to wreath laying**



**RCL Br#271 rep Tim Penny lays wreath
on behalf of Legion**



**Ed Haines prepares to lay wreath on behalf of
Aboriginal Veterans of Alberta**



Bugler Todd Gow and Piper Colin "Spot" Norris



**Claude Villeneuve and Brian Mason
in 1CAN PARA and FSSU period uniforms with Lou Lamy**



Todd Gow points his Alphorn towards the mountains and plays Amazing Grace in memory of his father, Neil Gow and the other Guardians of the Mountain



Father and son, Col (Ret'd) Bill Fletcher and son BGen Bill Fletcher



The Lamy Family, who makes their yearly trip to Siffleur to be with father Lou on this special day for him



3PPCLI Contingent with 3Div Comd and RSM



BGen Fletcher and wreath bearer escort Pte Atkinson



Bob Spisak and wreath bearer escort Pte Atkinson



Bob Copeland and wreath bearer escort Cpl Admiraal



Al Cameron pays respect after laying wreath on behalf of Veterans Voices of Canada



**Group Photo, with Ex Coelis Mountains in the rear
September 8th, 2020**