

AIRBORNE SOCIAL CLUB
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EDMONTON, ALBERTA T5E 6J8
JUNE 2020



SPECIAL EDITION - BEYOND COVID-19

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

I am happy to report there are no known cases of COVID-19 from within our club. As with the vast majority of the country who sit at home waiting for the call to once again gather in groups of their choice, so too has our club.

With restrictions placed on social gathering sizes, "club chalk assembly" await confirmation. Even though many of these restrictions have been relaxed to some degree, our normal place of gathering has yet been given the "green light" to open up fully, therefore requiring the club to stay in the "stand-by" position until restrictions are fully lifted and the next "chalk assembly" date is announced. This, we do not envision happening until the September 2020, hopefully.

I hope that everyone has a great summer and will be able to get together with your families and friends in whatever group size allowable in your respective areas. ***Be careful; stay safe and healthy.***

Normally, June 6th the club would meet en masse at the 1CANPARA Cairn (Airborne Monument) at Siffleur Falls Alberta in memory of the men who lead the way for those of us who followed their example. This year with COVID-19 restrictions in place did not stop Bill Dickson, who over the years was the steadfast and dedicated planner and coordinator for this yearly memorial event. Bill, as normal began initial planning sometime late December 2019/early 2020 well before the announcement of the COVID pandemic. As the pandemic progressed and it became apparent this year's memorial would have to be some major changes put in place. Bill then set in motion the idea, "come

hell or high water" COVID-19 or not, this memorial was too important not to happen.

While many of us sit back and succumbed to COVID, Bill planned, changed, amended and revamped plans so that Siffleur Memorial 2020 would take place. It is with much gratitude to Bill and his efforts that saw the memorial, once again take place; even though not as large of a gathering as previous years....thanks Bill.

SIFFLEUR FALLS 2020 D-DAY CEREMONY (THE PANDEMIC PARADE)

At the beginning of this year, we started off planning for the 76th Anniversary of D-Day ceremony at Siffleur Falls in our usual way. The program was outlined, messages went out to solicit attendance, the David Thompson Resort (DTR) was booked and blocked off for the 5 - 7 June period, and the climb team from 3rd Bn PPCLI contacted in preparation to take the ashes in our possession, up Normandy Peak. It all became the SOSOS as far as preparations went. We had done this 19 times before, so what could cause a problem this time.

And then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and most of our worlds turned upside down. In an announcement we went from a plan, to a Stop Drop. D-Day ceremony at Siffleur was not to be. The notice was sent out to the membership that our D-Day ceremony was cancelled.

In the ensuing weeks so much happened and so many changes were made it was almost impossible to make any predictions on "what might happen". As an individual, I was committed, if necessary, to be at the monument myself on the 6th June, and place a wreath at the

Cairn. Then we were informed by the Province that gatherings of 15 would be allowed, with social distancing to be respected. An update went out with the advisory we would hold a modified ceremony on the 6th June, but because of the restriction imposed, only 15 would be allowed to attend. The commitment of that number to attend was reached in an hour and we were good to go again.

A few weeks later, the restrictions were adjusted again by the Province, and we heard a gathering number of 50 outdoors, with spacing, was allowed. The call went out again to our members and it did not take us long to get a commitment of numbers saying they would attend. In fact, at times I thought we might have too many.

With now a VIP, a Padre, a bugler, and a piper coming, this modified ceremony was beginning to take on the look of a normal 6th June ceremony. We would not have our usual attendance by the 3rd Bn PPCLI members, as they had a distance travel restriction imposed on them. Alberta Parks confirmed they would block off the area in front of the monument prior to the ceremony. The late planning factors also prevented us printing a formal program to hand out, getting the back flags or a sound system installed

The ceremony was on and now it was up to the weather.

In the week preceding, the forecasts for the Nordegg area did not look good. Cloud and rain icons dotted the weather map for that weekend in June, for all of Alberta. Our luck! And rain it did.

When I left St. Albert early on the 6th June it was torrential to say the least. I thought I'd probably bump into Noah and his Ark on the Yellowhead on the way out

In my mind, this weather was going to put the hammer on attendance, and there is no way the VPMC bikers are going to travel in this mess. Oh, yea of little faith

By the time we got to Rocky Mountain House it was clearing, and as we proceeded west on Hwy 11 to Siffleur. The sun came out with mixed clouds, giving us spectacular views of light snow covered mountains amid clear skies. As we approached the Siffleur wilderness area and Mt.

Ex Coelis came into view, I realized everything was going to be alright!

Arriving at the Siffleur Falls Staging Area, the sight of around 150 cars parked in the area gave us an instant bolt of fear. I was sure that the front of the Cairn would be impacted preventing us from having a parade. Wrong again! Our Alberta Environment and Parks staff had not let us down. They had put up barriers the night before and cleared just enough space for us to have the ceremony. There is no question in my mind, had that not happened we would not be having a parade.

Based on what the weather was like six hours ago, I had no idea who was going to show up here, and when

As we set up the area for the parade, slowly our members and guests started to arrive. Just after 1300 hours you could hear the roar coming from the east on Hwy 11 as about 35 bikers arrived on scene. Turned out the VMPC Prairie lot from Edmonton had joined up with their Airborne Brothers from Medicine Hat/Lethbridge in Red Deer, then travelled on to Siffleur. What a sight!

Art Brochu formed the parade up at 1330 hours. The Maroon Blazers formed the front row; the Airborne Bikers took care of the rest

In lieu of our normal back flag placements, Bill Johnston, and Bill Shybunka picketed the Cairn with the 1CANPARA and CDN AB REGT Flags

Our guest attendant MLA Mark Smith, Drayton Valley/Devon was given the salute. Bugler Todd Gow, (son of Niel Gow ex-PPCLI and one of the finest, if not the finest bugler the Cdn Forces ever had) played the National Anthem. We were now on our way.

Our dedicated padre of many years, Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret'd) Dave Prouse gave the Invocation, followed by Bill Tremain reciting the Airborne Prayer. I read the tribute message from the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lawrence MacAulay, and a note of 1CANPARA's role and sacrifice on D-Day. I had received a message from General Kent Foster, who wished us well and left a special thought for his old buddy Chris Smith. We let Chris know the General said "Hello".

MLA Mark Smith then said a few words and brought greetings to us on behalf of himself, the Premier and MLA's. His expression of wanting to return at future ceremonies was welcomed

The Last Post was played, we observed the Two Minutes Silence and Spot Norris played the Lament prior to the Reveille. Binyon's Verse was then read by Bob Fouger, Sgt-At -Arms RCL #236 Winfield.

The parade was relaxed (not that it wasn't already) and the following wreaths were laid by those indicated:

- ❖ DVA – Col (Ret'd) Bill Fletcher
- ❖ Province of Alberta – MLA Mark Smith
- ❖ 6th AB Div (UK) – Bob Spisak, son of a 1CANPARA vet
- ❖ 1CANPARA – Isobel Allan, widow of a 1CANPARA vet.
- ❖ CDN AB Regt Assn – Mike Crepeau
- ❖ Aboriginal vets of Alberta
Michelle Laframboise
- ❖ 2/75th Rangers – Bob Copeland
- ❖ Veterans Voices of Canada – Al Cameron
- ❖ RCL #236 Winfield – Bob Fouger

After a few closing remarks, the parade was dismissed by Art Brochu and we gathered for a photo op. Because of the cramped area, social distancing was a bit difficult at times during this ceremony. When it came to breaking the rules for the group photo, I guess if the Prime Minister can gather in close for a photo op, we could do it on behalf of the guys behind us on the mountain

Special Note to Remember. We will begin planning for a ceremony for September 8th, 2020, to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Dedication of the 1CANPARA BN Cairn. It will be more formal, and with possibly more restrictions lifted, a bigger parade. More to follow on this in due course.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who attended this 76th Anniversary of D-Day ceremony especially those who travelled from afar, braved the elements and by doing so helped make this ceremony a success. I especially acknowledge the participation by Todd Gow, Spot Norris, and Dave Prowse, your roll is what makes the ceremony and gives it that needed emphasis to remind us of why we are here.

To Isobel Allan and Bob Spisak, thank you for coming. The memory of your loved ones departed are part of the story of this place. It is worth noting this 1CANPARA BN Cairn is an Alberta Monument of some significance, and it bears an important message. To that end, MLA Mark Smith, your attendance was appreciated. To the remainder that filled in the ranks and guests who attended and supported the parade, my thanks.

The bottom line here is “we never let the guys (and gals) on the mountain down”.
Airborne!

Capt (Ret'd) Bill Dickson, CD
MC/Coord 76th D-Day Ceremony
2020 Siffleur Falls

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.



**Dennis (Duke)
Clarence Connelly
1930 – 2020**

It is with great sadness that the family of Dennis (Duke) Clarence Connelly announce of his passing April 16, 2020 in Whitehorse, Yukon.

Duke was one of nine children, born on May 26, 1930, in Fort William, Ontario. He left home at 16 to help support the family and in 1947 at the age of 17, he joined the Canadian Armed Forces. Since he was under age he had his older brother forge his parent's signature allowing him to join early.

He spent the next 28 years serving in PPCLI (Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry), 2QOR of C (2nd Queen's Own Rifles of Canada), and finally in 1974, he retired as a Regimental

Sergeant Major in the Canadian Airborne Regiment. During this time, he also had UN Peacekeeping duties in Korea and Cyprus. Duke was very proud of his time spent in the Armed Forces.

Duke married the love of his life, Arlene Joan Connelly, on June 10, 1955 in Toronto Ontario, and the joy of his life was the birth of their son Dennis in 1959. The family moved to Whitehorse in 1974 where Duke began working for the Yukon Government, first in Education, and then the Operations Manager of Campgrounds, Parks and Historic Sites. In 1985 at the age of 55, Duke retired again. Not able to stay retired, he served three terms as a Whitehorse City Councilor, where as many might remember, a caricature depicted him as a “bull dog” on council.

Active in sports, Duke was dynamic as both a participant and coach and it was his passion for coaching that made an impact in the communities. Baseball, soccer, and most of all hockey is where he excelled, as his teams won many championships. Duke was devoted and enjoyed sharing his knowledge and expertise with the Whitehorse Cadet Camp.

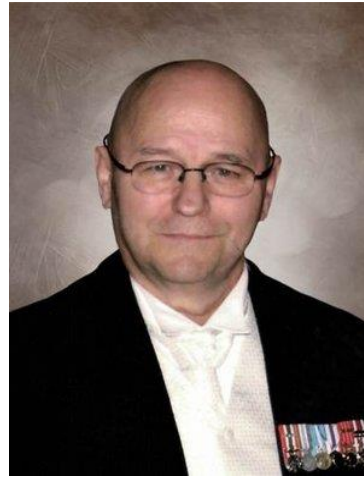
In his spare time, you could always find Duke enjoying the outdoors, canoeing, fishing, hiking and cross-country skiing. He especially loved spending his time at his cabin on Marsh Lake at New Constabulary at the end of his road “Dukes Arm”

Duke is survived and will be missed and lovingly remembered by his son Dennis and daughter-in-law Joanne (Yeulet), his three granddaughters Tiffany, Teresa, and Tara and his four great grandchildren, Zaria, Zylar, Emma and Charley. Duke was predeceased by his wife Arlene on June 12, 2011. He is now and for eternity, again in her loving arms.

Following Duke’s wishes he will be cremated and there will be a private family gathering. His love of dogs was obvious and he was seldom seen without his canine sidekick. In lieu of flowers, donations are greatly appreciated for Mae Bachur Humane Society or Heart and Stoke Society.

The family would like to express their sincere thanks and appreciation to his Doctor of many

years, Dr. Ken Quong, and the wonderful staff at Copper Ridge Place on Unit B. A very special thanks to Shannon Cooper who spent many hours visiting and bringing him his favorite treat of lemon meringue pie.



**Hebert Martineau
(1947-2020)**

At Hôpital Laval, on April 28, 2020, at the age of 72 years. Hubert was a former member of the Royal 22e Régiment and the Régiment Aéroporté, husband of Dame Nicole Béland. He was the son of the late Dame Jeannine

Mageau and the late Denis Martineau. He lived in Quebec.

In accordance with government measures and the recommendations to protect the population of Covid-19, the funeral will be held at a later date. To this end, regularly consult the Lépine Cloutier website for the date of the funeral celebration. He is survived by his wife Dame Nicole Béland; her children: Jean-René, Brigitte (Alain Savard), Martin (France Gélinas) and Hubert Jr (Tracy Walsh); her beloved grandchildren: Justin (Mackenzie), Mélodie (Terence), Chantal (Willy), Olivier (Mélanie), Rosalie (Aleks), Eugénie (Fred), Florence, Katrina and Natasha; his great-grandson Jules. He was the brother of: Michel (Ginette), Philippe, the late Murielle, Gustave (Sandra), Justine (Raymond) and Grégoire (Manon). He also leaves to mourn; his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law of the Béland family: Mario (Marjolaine) and Jacinthe (André) as well as his nephews, nieces, cousins, cousins, fellow soldiers and many friends.

The following article is from the British Parachute Regimental Association, Aldershot Branch Newsletter. Mike Muranetz receives their newsletter and has passed on with the idea there may be something of interest to our readers. As such I have extracted the next article which provides some interesting written by Ernie Morgan detailing his appointment as a Military Knight of Windsor and the history behind the

Military Knights of Windsor. It is most definitely worthwhile reading. Hope you enjoy.

**THE PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION - NEWSLETTER MAY 2020
MILITARY KNIGHTS OF WINDSOR - A PARA IN WINDSOR CASTLE.** By: Ernie Morgan MM

I was appointed as a Military Knight of Windsor on 19 January 2020

The Military Knights of Windsor are the oldest military establishment in the Army List. Formed by King Edward III in 1348, shortly after the battle of Crecy (1346), the foundation consisted of Knights who, having taken their private armies to France to fight for the King, had been taken prisoner by the French who demanded heavy ransoms in return for their release. This often meant selling up their complete estates to raise enough money.

Known as the Alms Knights, they formed part of the College of St George which was created to support the establishment of the Most Honourable and Noble Order of the Garter. 26 'Poor Knights', mirroring the 26 Garter Knights, were given accommodation in the Lower Ward of Windsor Castle in exchange for daily prayer in St George's Chapel for, and on behalf of, the Monarch and the Garter Knights. All the Alms Knights were unaccompanied in their somewhat monastic existence in the Castle, though undoubtedly some must have been married.

Due to the decline in the number of Alms Knights once there was no longer a requirement for accommodation by ransomed landowners, King Henry VIII reduced the establishment to 13, and in accordance with his will, Queen Elizabeth I improved the accommodation of the Knights so that they were housed individually with one of their number appointed as Governor, and installed in the old belfry, now known as the Mary Tudor Tower.



New regulations for the establishment and governance of the Alms Knights were drawn up under the Statutes of 1559. In 1833, King William IV changed the designation of the Alms Knights to that of 'The Military Knights of Windsor' and at the same time granted them permission to wear uniform of Army Officers on the Unattached List. This dress is still worn today and comprises a scarlet tailcoat (in the summer), sword, sash and cocked hat with plume.

This photo of the Military Knights was taken in 2016



The Knights are all retired Army Officers dependent on their Army Pensions, as, apart from a small stipend, they are not paid for their duties. To qualify for admission to this select and elite community whose members live within the walls of Windsor Castle, candidates must be married, be under the age of 67 and have a distinguished army record. They must join a waiting list of applicants awaiting a vacancy to arise before being vetted by a selection process, approved by the Sovereign and then admitted with all due ceremony. The individual must be prepared to undertake the numerous duties expected of him over the year, most of which entail being on parade nearly every Sunday. The main event in the calendar is the Garter Ceremony when the Military Knights head this very colourful procession through the Castle precincts and into St George's Chapel, the spiritual home of the Order of the Garter. Additionally, there are four 'obits' (Remembrances of College Benefactors) in the year, plus the occasional military funeral and the laying up of a Garter Knight's Banner. A further duty involving the Military Knights is to be on parade for State Visits at Windsor Castle. On average, the Knights are on parade approx 52 times in the year, in addition to which are several

rehearsals. Most of these duties are linked to the Chapel, and only very occasionally are the Knights on parade away from Windsor. Some Military Knights undertake voluntary roles within the College and Castle. The Knights' homes in the Lower Ward of the castle are theirs for as long as they can carry out their duties, and in most cases, this takes them to the end of their days.

Today, the Military Knights, who are no longer necessarily poor, but are still military pensioners, participate in the Order's processions, escorting the Knights and Ladies of the Garter, and in the daily services in St. George's Chapel. They are not members of the Order itself, nor are they automatically a knight of any chivalric order.

There is a mix of cap badges and DE/LE Officers from Capt - Brig; with the Governor normally being a Maj Gen or Lt Gen.

In 2006, when I was 54 and in what I thought was my final year of service, I made some enquiries about the Military Knights of Windsor. I was extended in service until 2009. Although the minimum age for admission is 60, between 2006 - 2012, I received numerous phone calls and letters seeking confirmation that I was still interested.

In 2012, I was called to Windsor Castle for an interview with the then Governor of the Military Knights (Maj Gen Sir Michael Hobbs KCVO CBE), which I successfully passed, and my name was added to the official list.

In 2014, me and my wife had to go to Windsor Castle for interviews with the present Governor of the Military Knights (Lt Gen P Pearson CB CBE); the Governor of Windsor Castle (Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE), and the Dean of St George's Chapel (The Right Reverend Sir David Conner KCVO).

On 16 July 2019 I was informed that my name was being put forward to HM The Queen for her approval for me to fill a vacancy that occurred on 26 June when a Military Knight died. On 23 July I was informed that HM had approved my appointment. I moved into Windsor Castle on 4 January 2020 and was officially installed as a Military Knight of Windsor on 19 January. Previous Paras to have been appointed are: Maj Gen Sir Peter Downward KCVO CB DSO DFC -

13th Bn Para Regt, 1944 - 45, and Glider Pilot Regt. Governor of the Military Knights 1989 - 2000. Now deceased. Maj G R Mitchell MBE BEM (Gordon) - 1 SAS 1944 - 45, 1 Para and Gds Indep Para Coy 1946 - 51, 22 SAS 1962 - 65. Military Knight 1988 - 2001. Now deceased. Capt (Hon Maj) P H Bolton MBE (Peter) - 9 Cdo WWII, 5th Bn Para Regt 1947. Military Knight 1990 - 2011. Now deceased

Earlier this year I informed Maj Paul Raison of my appointment and RHQ Para and the PRA decided that a Regimental flag would be presented to me, to be flown from my house in the castle on The Queen's birthday (21 April) and Garter Day in June.



AIRBORNE SOCIAL CLUB (EDMONTON) CLUB MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

In accordance with Club By-Laws once, a membership reaches end-December for that year paid-up period that membership will have until end-June the following year to renew or have their name placed on an inactive listing. Membership is open to paratroopers of all categories, former or current. Membership dues remains at \$10 yearly.

As the club secretary and membership representative, I endeavour to keep our membership contact information up-to-date. Our normal method of contact is through email, less mailing of cards. If you have moved or had a postal or email address changed since last contact please let me know so I can make corrections. In addition, if you know of any member who may have moved or are not receiving the newsletter contact me at dr.paris@shaw.ca

HOSPITAL MEMBER

The club hospital member, on behalf of the club provides notification of members hospitalized or at home recouping. If you know of anyone who may not be doing well, please let Ben know so he can arrange to visit and deliver hospital comforts. Ben's contact info: ben.murdock@shaw.ca

KIT SHOP

Kit shop and other related airborne items; prints, books and items are available through Bill Dickson: abn339@shaw.ca

HUMOUR CORNER

The wisdom of an older woman

Husband to Wife: After being married for 45 years, I took a careful look at my wife one day and said, "forty-five years ago we had a cheap house, a junk car, slept on a sofa bed and watched a 10-inch black and white TV, but I got to sleep every night with a hot 23-year-old girl. Now I have a big home, an expensive vehicle, a nice big bed and a large screen TV, but I'm sleeping with a 70-year-old woman. It seems to me that you're not holding up your side of things."

Wife to Husband: You can go out and find a hot 23-year-old girl and I will make sure that I would once again be living in a cheap house, driving a junk car, sleeping on a sofa bed and watching a 10-inch black and white TV.

A little boy comes down to breakfast. Since they live on a farm, his mother asks if he had done his chores.

"Not yet," said the little boy.

His mother tells him no breakfast until he does his chores.

Well, he's a little teed off, so he goes to feed the chickens, and he kicks a chicken. He goes to feed the cows, and he kicks a cow. He goes to feed the pigs, and he kicks a pig. He goes back in for breakfast and his mother gives him a bowl of dry cereal.

"How come I don't get any eggs and bacon? Why don't I have any milk in my cereal?" He asks. "Well," his mother says, "I saw you kick a chicken, so you don't get any eggs for a week. I saw you kick the pig, so you don't get any bacon for a week either."

I saw you kick the cow so for a week you aren't getting any milk."

Just then, his father comes down for breakfast and kicks the cat out of the way...

The little boy looks at his mother with a smile, and says, "You going to tell him or should I?"

Thought to ponder during this pandemic...

"Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass, it is about learning how to dance in the rain."

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

SIFFLEUR FALLS 2020 - THE PANDEMIC PARADE

Photo Credits: Simon Rozendaal



Art Brochu, briefs the formation



Parade formed in "social distancing" formation



Padre LCol (Ret'd) Dave Prouse delivers the Invocation



Capt (Ret'd) Bill Tremain reciting the Airborne Prayer



Flag Bearers Bill Shybunka, Bill Johnston and Bugler Todd Gow stand mounted at the cairn



MLA Mark Smith, Drayton Valley/Devon pays tribute after laying wreath on behalf of the Government of Alberta



Isobel Allan, widow of 1CANPARA veteran is escorted to the wreath laying



Col (Ret'd) Bill Fletcher salutes after laying wreath on behalf of DVA



Veterans Voices of Canada Allan Cameron lays wreath on behalf of his Veterans Voices



Bill Dickson and bugler Todd Gow



Piper MWO (Re'd) Colin "Spot" Norris pipes the Last Post and Reville



L-R: Allan Cameron, Bill Dickson, RCL #236 Winfield, Bob Fouger and MLA Mark Smith

Participants – Siffleur Falls D-Day Ceremony 2020



**Veterans Parachute Motorcycle Club members with
Motorcycle brothers/sisters from Medicine Hat/Lethbridge**