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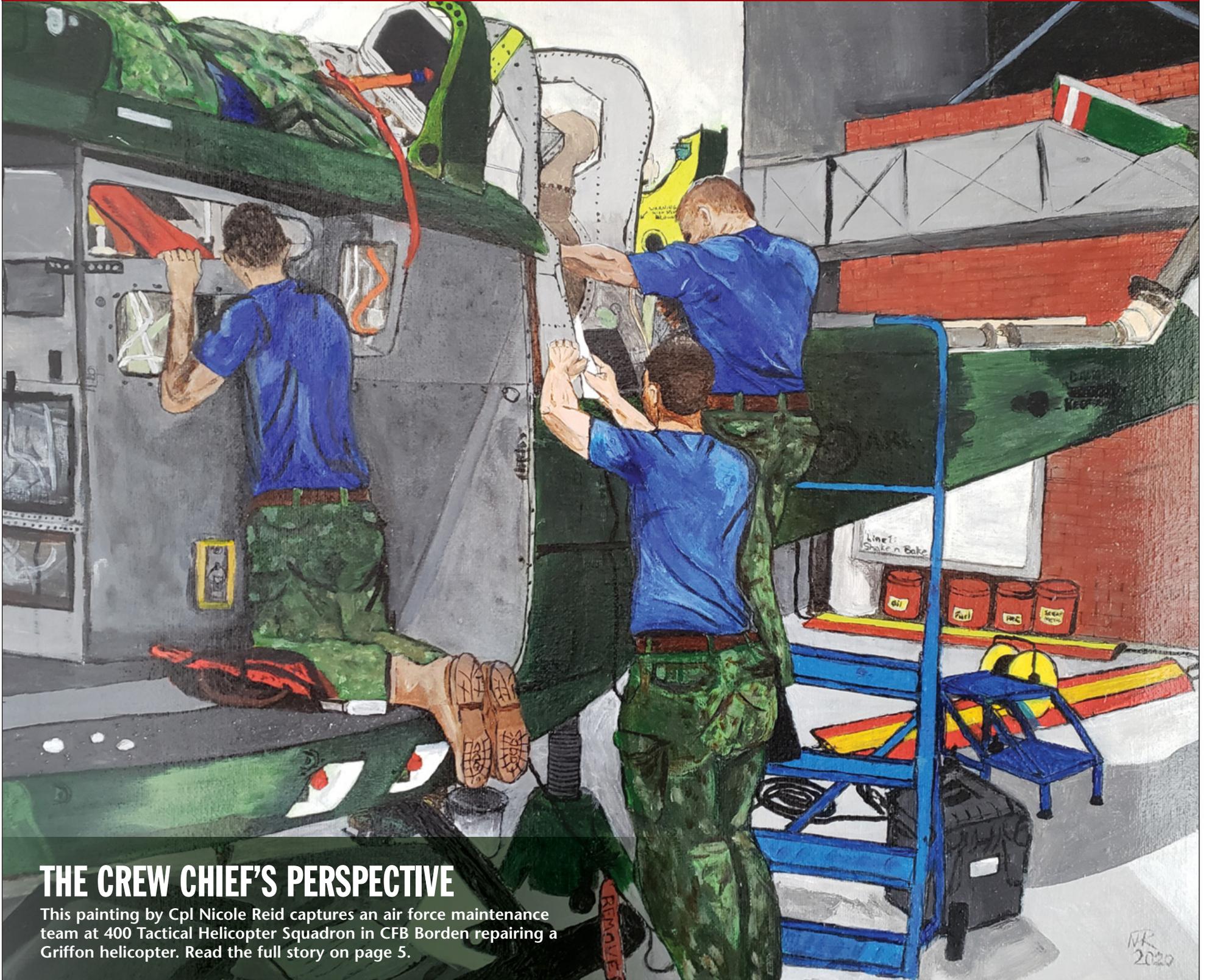
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THE CREW CHIEF'S PERSPECTIVE

This painting by Cpl Nicole Reid captures an air force maintenance team at 400 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in CFB Borden repairing a Griffon helicopter. Read the full story on page 5.

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REMEMBRANCE DAY
NOVEMBER 11
LEST WE FORGET

Message from the Admiral



2020 has been an eventful year to say the least. We began the year with the completion of the Admiralty paint scheme for HMCS Regina to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the victory of the Battle of Atlantic. We all planned for an active year with operations, exercises, and commemorations, but as you know, we had to make modifications to keep our shipmates, friends and families safe.

I am proud of the Defence Team as we came together to be kind, be safe, and be calm during these uncertain and unprecedented times, and for that I thank all DND and CAF members, as well as their friends and families. Now it is time to come together, remember, and honour those who served and still continue to serve Canada.

Remembrance Day ceremonies will be different this year, to accommodate the safety of our community, with many available virtually. Wreaths will still be placed at cenotaphs and monuments, as well as a sail past of Victoria will be conducted. This Remembrance Day, we still have the ability to commemorate in a safe way from coast to coast to coast. This year, we will remember the sacrifices of those who fought valiantly and the values they fought for. The Battle of Atlantic was the longest battle of the Second World War. Over the course of 2,075 days, Allied naval and air forces fought more than 100 convoy battles and as many as 1,000 single ship actions against submarines and warships of the German and Italian navies.

During the Battle of the Atlantic, many were lost at sea therefore many Canadian families cannot visit the final resting place for their loved ones. Let's grieve with those families and continue to remember all sacrifices made to ensure the freedoms we enjoy today in our daily routines.

Together, whether safely-distanced or virtually, we will honour all those who have served before us and continue to serve alongside us. I wish to particularly honour those who lost their lives in service to their country during 2020 – Capt Kevin Hagen, Capt Maxime Miron-Morin, SLt Matthew Pyke, MCpl Matthew Cousins, SLt Abbigail Cowbrough, Capt Brenden MacDonald, Capt Jenn Casey, and Cpl James Choi – they in particular will be in my thoughts as I lay my wreath at the cenotaph in Victoria on behalf of all of you.

Honour all those who have fallen by being kind, being calm, and being safe this Remembrance Day.

RAdm Bob Auchterlonie
Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific



Message from the Base Commander

As we prepare to mark Remembrance Day in an unfamiliar manner in an unprecedented year, it is important that we stay connected to the meaning of November 11th – a day to honour and remember all those who have served and sacrificed for our country. This year we mark the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the victory of the Battle of the Atlantic, which was the longest continuous engagement of the war. It spanned six years and saw more than 4,600 courageous Canadian lives lost at sea. That victory, and the sacrifices made by those to secure it, are all the more poignant this year because we cannot commemorate it together as intended.

In an effort to limit the risk of COVID-19 exposure for our veterans, community members, and you, members of our Defence Team, Commander MARPAC has directed all military members to observe Remembrance Day from home. There are a number of ways to remain connected while doing so. Ceremonies from across the country will be available on major news networks and live streamed on social media. Locally, CHEK news is planning to broadcast the Victoria Legislature ceremony live.

Regardless of where, or how, you choose to commemorate Remembrance Day this year, ensure you find time to honour our veterans, both those we lost and those who returned, many never the same. Pause to think of our brave women and men in uniform currently deployed throughout the world, including the crew of HMCS Winnipeg, working to secure peace and security for all. Acknowledge the military families whose support and sacrifices enable us to do what we do. Lest We Forget.

Capt(N) Sam Sader
Base Commander



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Stefan Stralbiski, Manager, Esquimalt

Remembering in 2020

MARPAC Public Affairs

This year has been a year like none other. Every facet of our lives has been changed by the global pandemic. Nothing has escaped its impact, including how we will remember and commemorate our veterans this Remembrance Day.

This year, we will remember the sacrifices of those who fought valiantly and the values they fought for. The Battle of Atlantic was the longest battle of the Second World War. Over the course of 2,075 days, Allied naval and air forces fought more than 100 convoy battles and as many as 1,000 single ship actions against submarines and warships of the German and Italian navies.

During the Battle of the Atlantic, many were lost at sea, so many Canadian families cannot visit the final resting place. Let's grieve with those families and continue to remember all sacrifices made to ensure the freedoms we enjoy today in our daily routines.

Instead of the crowds of hundreds and thousands that gather together to pay their respects, this year people are being asked to do so virtually.

Locally, there will be live coverage on television and on Maritime Forces

Pacific (MARPAC) social media accounts.

Rear-Admiral (RAdm) Bob Auchterlonie will lay a wreath at the Victoria Cenotaph on behalf of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

"Pausing in silence to honour all those who have fallen, those who have served, and those who continue to serve, is especially important today in these unprecedented times. I wish to honour those who recently lost their lives in service to Canada this year – I will be keeping them, those who gave the ultimate sacrifice and all their families in my thoughts and prayers as I lay the wreath at the Victoria Cenotaph on behalf of Maritime Forces Pacific," said Rear-Admiral (RAdm) Bob Auchterlonie.

Commemorative sail past

There will be a commemorative sail past with *HMCS Saskatoon* in the lead and *HMCS Brandon* in the rear, with a convoy of Orca-class Patrol Craft Training vessels in-between, at the following locations and times:

- Sidney: 10:45 a.m.
- Island View Beach: 11:15 a.m.
- Cordova Beach: 11:35 a.m.
- Oak Bay/Baynes: 12:15 p.m.
- Clover Point: 12:55 p.m.
- Ogden Point: 13:10 p.m.
- Esquimalt Lagoon: 13:20 p.m.

The sail pasts will also be live streamed on the MARPAC Facebook Page. We encourage everyone to watch the sail past online, how-

ever if you wish to watch the sail past in-person please ensure to follow Provincial Health Guidelines of physical distancing and wearing masks.

Speakers Program

In keeping with these guidelines, the Department of National Defence's National Veterans' Week Speakers Program, which has historically arranged for veterans and Canadian Forces members to visit schools, will be virtual this year. Students can watch videos of veterans talking about their experiences, or have a live online session in their classrooms with a member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Not happening this year

The God's Acre Cemetery ceremony and of the Parade through Victoria have been cancelled.

"While we obviously feel that there must be a Ceremony to recognize the sacrifices made for us to live in such an amazing country, we know that we must do everything that we can to keep the numbers down" said Angus Stanfield, Vice President, Dominion Command, Royal Canadian Legion and Chair, Victoria Remembrance Day Committee Poppy Fund

In 2020, showing our appreciation and giving thanks to our veterans means staying apart and going virtual. By doing so, we are honouring the sacrifices they made for our benefit today.

Saluting all who have served!

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The Chief and Petty Officers' Mess at CFB Esquimalt will be closed on November 11th, 2020.

There will be no reception hosted by Esquimalt Dockyard Branch 172 due to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic provincial restrictions and CFB Esquimalt's closure policy to visitors.

Please remain safe and healthy this Remembrance Day. We hope to resume our commemorative reception in 2021.

Regards,
Chief and Petty Officers' Mess Executive and Esquimalt Dockyard Branch 172 Executive

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2020 National Silver Cross Mother - Debbie Sullivan



Courtesy the Royal Canadian Legion

Debbie Sullivan has been chosen as this year's National Silver Cross Mother.

The National Silver Cross Mother is chosen by the Legion among nominations made by Legion Provincial Commands and individuals to represent the mothers of Canada at the National Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ottawa.

She will place a wreath at the National War Memorial on Nov. 11 on behalf of all Canadian mothers who have lost a son or a daughter in the military service of Canada. Throughout the year until October 2021, she will perform other duties honouring the Fallen from all conflicts.

Her son, Lt(N) Christopher Edward Saunders was a Naval Officer in the Royal Canadian Navy. He was killed during a tragic



fire while serving aboard *HMCS Chicoutimi* on Oct. 6, 2004.

The loss of her son left deep scars.

"Even though it has been 16 years since I lost Chris, the pain of his absence is felt every day," she says. "I cope with the help of my husband and family members, as well as a grief support group I belong to."

While in Halifax to receive the Silver Cross, she met with many of her son's former mates and peers who performed a special ceremony to make her an honorary submariner – a true thrill for her.

"My husband and I know that with young men and women like them, we are in good shape for the future," she says.



Lt(N) Christopher Edward Saunders

We **REMEMBER HONOUR & SALUTE** the brave men and women who serve

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matters of OPINION

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WHAT SAY YOU

WREN granddaughter follows tradition

My grandmother, Vincenza (Jennie) Carmel D'Ammizio, SN W4062, was a member of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS) during the Second World War.

She signed up to serve in the navy despite her serious fear of water and complete inability to swim. She left her mother and five sisters behind in Thorold, ON, as well as the secure employment she had working at a local general store.

She was recruited at HMCS Star in Hamilton and then, like all "Wrens", went to her basic training in Galt, ON, where she

earned \$1.05 per day.

Upon graduation, she was transferred to serve in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as an "OS", an officer's steward in the accounting division. She remembered that, even in 1943, Halifax still showed the scars of the First World War explosion caused when two ships collided there in 1917.

Sometimes in Halifax the Wrens were brought on board the ships to work, as well "show off" to their male counterparts. They would do drill, but my grandmother remarked that she was often afraid the leading WREN would forget to halt them, and she would "fall off the edge of the ship into the ocean". Due to her morbid fear of the water, this was no small concern to her.

She was kidded her entire life that the Jenny Wren statue in Galt was put up in her memory. However, Jenny Wren Lane in Turkey Point, ON, does appear to have been named after her. When the township looked to rename the local numbered roads with better names, the very lane she took to the beach every day was re-named Jenny Wren Lane in the late 1990s. It was likely her nephew who proposed the name. It is right between two cottages that my Great Grandparents owned, where Jennie would spend much of her time in the 1950s and 1960s.

Being a member of the WRCNS had a tremendous impact on her life. She had a keen

sense of discipline, timeliness, and order, and respected all branches of the Service.

She stayed in touch with fellow Wrens for the rest of her life and often visited her friends in Midland, ON, and another Wren who later moved to California.

I am extremely proud of the sacrifices my grandmother made, who chose to leave her close-knit Italian family behind, and volunteer for a branch of the service due to her love of country. I chose to follow in her footsteps and am a recent graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada (Class of 2020).

Later this week, I will start Naval Warfare Officer Training, phase 3.

If there are other Wren granddaughters currently serving with the Royal Canadian Navy I would love to hear from you!

A/SLt Natasha Badowski

Natasha.badowski@forces.gc.ca



A Minute Lost in Silence

By Garth Paul Ukrainetz

Poet Laureate of the Blackmud Creek

**A minute lost in silence
Loud the roar of wartime years
Sacred poppies of November
In remembrance of their tears
In our minute lost in silence
We must listen close together
Lest we all forget to hear it
Lest the silence lasts forever**

2020 Garth Paul Ukrainetz

In special observance of the 75th Anniversary
of the end of the Second World War
"Lest We Forget"

Thank you for your service



As long as I can remember, I and my brother and sisters watched our father march down Main Street to the cenotaph along with other veterans in the area on Nov. 11th.

It did not matter whether it was cold, it did not matter if it was raining, and it did not matter if it was snowing, the veteran's stood there remembering the fallen - the brave young men who never came home.

My father was a Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR) signalman. He did six Newfie Derry crossings. I asked him one year (I do believe I was 12 years old at the time) why he stood there on those cold wet days?

His response, I still hear echoing in my head some 54 years later. "Son, I will never be as cold as I was crossing the North Atlantic during a winter storm during the war. I stand because some of my friends cannot, as they did not return home as I did, and so you, your brother, and sisters can have the life they will never have."

Every year since, I have stood at a cenotaph on Remembrance Day, as a teen on up to a grown man, as a member in uniform for

36 plus years, as a retired member now, and as a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, to pay my respects to the fallen.

A few years ago, here in Powell River BC, I did a Remembrance Day talk at one of the junior schools, about Passchendaele, Vimy Ridge, Dieppe, and Juno Beach and how the convoys crossing the North Atlantic were so vital to the war effort.

A few days later, I was standing outside a mall on Poppy Day and a young student recognized me. She said hello and as she walked away she said to her Mother, "I do not understand." It was cold, wet, breezy day. About 20 minutes later they came out of the mall, and the Mom put some money in the Poppy Box. I asked the young student what she did not understand. She responded, "I do not know why you are standing outside here in the cold, when you could be standing inside where it is warm and dry."

I asked her mother if I could pin the poppy on her jacket. As I pinned the poppy on her lapel, I asked her if she remembered the talk I gave at her school. She nodded yes. Then I explained to her, "I will never be as cold as those young lads who were fighting in the trenches at Passchendaele and I will never be as cold as those young sailors who crossed the North Atlantic to bring those vital supplies to England."

She smiled and gave me the biggest hug she could and said, "Thank you for you service."

CPO2 (Retired) Chris Carnall



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Aviation technician uses art to uplift

Peter Mallett, Staff Writer

When Cpl Nicole Reid, 27, paints, each brush stroke she puts on the canvass helps her blow off steam. The Aviation Technician with CFB Borden's 400 Tactical Helicopter Squadron conducts maintenance and repairs on CH146 Griffon helicopters and while fulfilling, it can be stressful.

Painting in her off-hours grew following a deployment to Mali in support of UN Mission MinusINUSMA in 2018.

"I found the tour in Africa highly demanding and difficult, so more and more I really began to enjoy painting as an outlet for stress relief."

Life at the base finds its way onto her canvas – something she calls "slice of life" paintings.

The living room in her Residential Housing Unit is a makeshift art studio. Acrylic paint colours she selects are dependent on the mood she wants to convey.

"My overall intention is to capture the work we do and the people and faces behind it. My paintings aren't just about a helicopter but the technicians who work day-in and day-out to make it safe to fly."

Her painting *The Face of 400 Sqn* was created in 2018. It was done at the request of the then 1 Wing Kingston commander as a gift to 1 Wing. It still hangs in the Wing's main entrance today and was her first commissioned work.

"It's an image of a technician who is working at the back of a helicopter during heavy maintenance on a Griffon," said Cpl Reid. "The commander had wanted a painting that truly captured what 400 Sqn does and it shows the chopper completely torn apart, so I felt it captured exactly what he wanted to see."

She has been mechanically inclined since childhood helping her father take apart and rebuild engines. Years later, she attended college where she studied automotive service and repair. She joined the army reserves in 2009 shortly after visiting a recruiting booth that was set up at a local summer fair. After transferring to the Royal Canadian Air Force in 2013, she trained at the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering.

"Since I tend to be an all-or-nothing type of person, I decided right then and there that the military was the career for me and there was no turning back."

There is great responsibility that comes with her current job. She is a technical authority for air worthiness of all the jobs she and her team complete. As a technical authority, she verifies and certifies the work of her colleagues.

"I enjoy being good at what I do and truly enjoy coming to work every day. Despite the physical and mental demands of this job, I am where I want to be and I wouldn't trade that for anything."

Art has also been a life-long passion. She has no formal training and has learned and honed her craft over time. She is one of many artists to join The Steel Spirit. Founded by former Paramedic Barbara Brown in 2017, the gallery features the artwork of military members, veterans, first responders, and hospital practitioners.

"I didn't become a member just to have my art seen by other people, although that is truly a thrill," she said. "I love being involved with Steel Spirit because it enables me to meet other military members and veterans from all over with different backgrounds."



I found the tour in Africa highly demanding and difficult, so more and more I really began to enjoy painting as an outlet for stress relief."

Cpl Nicole Reid, Aviation Technician



Cpl Nicole Reid



This painting - *The Face of 400 Sqn* - portrays an aviation technician concentrating on his work repairing a Griffon helicopter.



This day-in-the-life painting shows technicians waiting to load a CH146 Griffon helicopter into the C-17 while in Mali, Africa.



The annual Steel Spirit Gallery, founded by Barbara Brown in 2017, showcases the unique artwork of military, police, firefighters, paramedics, hospital practitioners, and other first responders.

Brown's inspiration initially came from her own ties to the military and its unique lifestyle; however, she quickly noticed an interconnectedness between the emotional

experiences of military members and first responders.

"Diverse backgrounds lead to diverse artwork," said Brown. "It is one of the things that makes this project so special."

For more information, visit www.thesteelspirit.ca. Steel Spirit Galley is accepting artwork submissions by military and first responder services.

DECEMBER 1944

An "Alouette" Christmas story

Second Lieutenant Rachel Brosseau, with Lieutenant-Colonel Jody Edmonstone

In 2019, Jean Cauchy was unable to travel to Bagotville, Quebec, (the home base of the Alouettes) for the annual Remembrance Day service. So Lieutenant-Colonel Jody Edmonstone, 425 Squadron's commanding officer, Master Warrant Officer Gino Côté, Captain Matt Stokes, and Richard Girouard, the squadron historian, travelled to Quebec City to mark Remembrance Day with the 95-year-old Alouette and 60 other veterans at Maison Paul Triquet, a veterans' residence where Flight Sergeant Cauchy lives.

After the service, Lieutenant-Colonel Edmonstone asked Flight Sergeant Cauchy if he had ever experienced an engine failure while flying bombers during the war. Over the next two hours, this amazing story unfolded.



Lieutenant-Colonel Jody Edmonstone (left), Commanding Officer of 425 Tactical Fighter Squadron, along with other members of the 425 Squadron family, marked Remembrance Day 2019 with a war-era member of the squadron, Flight Sergeant (Retired) Jean Cauchy in Quebec City. Inset: Newly-winged pilot Jean Cauchy's 1944 graduation portrait.

Photos Courtesy Jean Cauchy

Jean Cauchy, born in Lévis, Québec, in 1924, joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942. He was 18, and had just learned that his brother Louis, serving with the Royal Air Force (RAF) as an air gunner, had been shot down during a bombing mission over Fortress Europe.

He received his pilot wings after a year and a half of training and, in January 1944, was transferred to Royal Air Force Station Tholthorpe in Yorkshire, England, to fly with the 425 Squadron—the "Alouettes".

Christmas 1944

Christmas was quickly approaching at Tholthorpe. The squadron adjutant called for volunteers to prepare some events for a Christmas Eve celebration. Knowing Flight Sergeant Cauchy was an avid singer, the adjutant asked him to assemble a squadron choir to sing Christmas carols during Christmas dinner and other festivities. A reporter from Radio Canada would be present to record the choir and broadcast it in Canada on Christmas Day.

Time was short, so without delay, Flight Sergeant Cauchy quickly assembled what he considered to be a rather decent 425 Squadron choir. They held a few practices and he was satisfied they would be ready for the event.

As Christmas Eve approached, he learned the squadron was tasked with a bombing mission on Dec. 24. Most of the choir members would be involved in the raid. Fortunately, it was a day-time attack on Dusseldorf, which would allow them to return in time for

the celebrations and, more importantly, their performance.

It was a cold and clear day with excellent weather for the raid. The formation of six Halifax bombers were able reach their target without opposition and drop their bombs at 2:55 p.m. Their raid was successful, leaving heavy damage on the enemy airfield.

A few minutes later, however, the successful mission took an unexpected turn for the worse.

The formation route was planned to avoid known areas of anti-aircraft artillery fire known as flak. At 3:02 p.m., Flight Sergeant Cauchy's aircraft was targeted by an enemy battery, taking heavy damage to the right wing. They subsequently lost one of the four Halifax engines, but the aircraft was still able to fly and maintain altitude, although at a reduced speed. To make matters worse, the crew reported there was still a bomb in the bomb bay that hadn't released during the attack. The crew was now at risk of the bomb going off if they manoeuvred too aggressively or took further damage.

At the controls, Flight Sergeant Cauchy began weighing his options: return to Tholthorpe or divert to another base. The bomber formations always tried to maintain formation integrity so the gunners could better defend against enemy fighters. But now

his Halifax was losing speed, and they were left behind, vulnerable to enemy attack.

In the chaos, Flight Sergeant Cauchy's navigator, Flying Officer J.J.P. L'Esperance, came on the aircraft's intercom giving him a new vector (direction and speed) to divert to RAF Rivenhall, the closest base. It was often used by aircraft needing to divert after bombing raids. After consulting with Flying Officer L'Esperance again, and despite wanting to get everyone home for the Christmas celebrations, Flight Sergeant Cauchy realized that diverting to Rivenhall would be the safest option for his crew and aircraft.

He turned the damaged bomber toward the divert field.

They were still being targeted by flak occasionally as they approached the English Channel and Flight Sergeant Cauchy manoeuvred his aircraft evasively to avoid any more damage, despite protests from the navigator and other crew. They were all very concerned about the unreleased bomb going off. If it was jostled loose in the bomb bay, they would all be done for.

The crew shouted over the aircraft's intercom that Flight Sergeant Cauchy should minimize manoeuvres, and he subsequently turned off the intercom to silence them. He needed to remain focused on flying the plane

as smoothly all while avoiding being hit by more flak. It was the perfect Catch 22.

Clearing the European coast and the flak batteries, he faced his next challenge of landing the Halifax without setting off the bomb. It had to be smooth or, again, they would be in big trouble. In the words of Flight Sergeant Cauchy, he lined up to the field and made the best landing of his life and "greased it on" to the grass runway at Rivenhall.

The control tower had him taxi far away from other planes and buildings due to their hung ordnance. Breathing a sigh of relief, Flight Sergeant Cauchy shut down the remaining three engines and the crew left the aircraft. Everyone had arrived safely.

Safe in Rivenhall for Christmas

The crew made their way into the station and realized there weren't a lot of people around as many were on leave for the holiday. There was a pub near the base that was open, and they went there with several crews from other formations who had also diverted.

After a very stressful mission, the crews were happy to be served by the proprietor, described as "a beautiful red-headed English woman."

The crews enjoyed a few drinks while Flight Sergeant Cauchy and

Flying Officer L'Esperance decided to find a midnight Christmas mass. They wandered around until they found a nearby Roman Catholic Church. They knocked on the door despite blackout conditions, which meant all building windows and other lights were hidden or extinguished to prevent targeting by enemy bombers at night. A priest answered the door and asked what the two were doing there. They asked if there was going to be a midnight mass. Dumbfounded, the priest laughed and explained they were under blackout conditions and haven't had midnight mass in years, and there wouldn't be one that night either.

Resigned, the two aviators made their way back to the pub to rejoin their friends. Given there were no kitchen staff or meals available, some of the base duty personnel worked to find food for the diverted crews. After an exhaustive search, the only thing they could come up with was Spam from ration packs. Far from the Christmas feast they had been hoping for, the crews made the best of their Christmas Eve at the pub in the presence of their red-headed benefactor, some good English ale, and not-so-good Spam.

A few days later, Flight Sergeant Cauchy and his crew made it back to RAF Tholthorpe. He quickly tracked down the reporter from Radio Canada, and asked if the choir had been able to sing without him and some of the other members, and how the recording had gone. The reporter told him that at the last minute an ad hoc choir had been assembled; they attempted to sing the carols but unfortunately they were not very good. On top of the poor vocals of the makeshift choir, the acoustics of the room made for a terrible recording. As a result, Radio Canada didn't air the Christmas performance back home in Canada.

Shot down

Flight Sergeant Cauchy flew six missions on the Halifax Mark III Bomber during the Second World War before being shot down on Jan. 5, 1945. He and his crew were captured by German forces and spent the remainder of the war at Stalag Luft I as prisoners of war until the camp was liberated by the Allies in May 1945.

War's End

After the war, Flight Sergeant Cauchy returned to Canada and released from the military. He maintained close ties with 425 Squadron, and served as their honorary colonel from 1998 to 2001.



Serge & Galley

OPERATION FREEDOM PAWS

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

A Royal Canadian Navy sailor is putting his best paws forward for charity.

Sailor First Class Serge Lacasse, 36, has joined forces with Operation Freedom Paws Canada to help promote their goal of empowering veterans and individuals with disabilities by teaching them to train their own dog and certify them as a service dog.

Through a special therapeutic canine-human relationship, veterans and others can live an enriched life despite their disability.

"A relationship with a dog is all about chemistry," said S1 Lacasse of his dog Galley, who he acquired five months ago with the help of the charity. "We hit it off immediately, as soon as he saw me he came up to me and licked my face and that was it."

He is currently coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a psychological ailment developed over eight years working in submarines, and is now transitioning out of the navy.

"I suffered from all the classic symptoms and I was considered completely dysfunctional in society," he says. "I couldn't go out in public or even go to the grocery store without anxiety and panic attacks, and wanted to remove myself from society, and my relationship with my friends and spouse had completely crumbled."

S1 Lacasse has promoted the charity to Canadian Submarine Force, submarines HMCS Victoria and HMCS Chicoutimi, Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters, HMCS Regina and the Esquimalt Military Police and they have all chosen to support Operation Freedom Paws through the National Defence Workplace Charitable Campaign (NDWCC).

"I have seen first-hand the affect this program has had on S1 Lacasse and was very happy to see the smile back on his face and that familiar personality we are all used to," said CPO2 Michael (Rob)

Tibbetts, CANSUBFOR Chief. "He is an immensely proud submariner and wears his dolphins with pride wherever he goes."

The Canadian version of the U.S.-based charity began last year by Qualicum Beach resident Barbara Ashmead. She matches rescue dogs with individuals and teaches them how to train their dog properly. The end goal is to have both dog and owner certified under the B.C. Guide Dog and Service Dog Act.

In a large riding ring in Fanny Bay, dogs and owners train a minimum of twice a week for 48 weeks to earn their certification. Crucial to the certification process is a dog's ability to recognize their owner's trigger symptoms and how to help calm them.

"With training dogs and their handlers, it's all about practice, practice, practice, and a whole lot of patience and learning to recognize the dog alerts. The process takes a great deal of time but the payoff is well worth it," says Ashmead. "The very special therapeutic canine-human relationship helps them get back out in their communities and begin to view their future with renewed hope."

The cost of acquiring a fully-trained service dog can cost up to \$40,000 or more depending on the client's health issues, but with Operation Freedom Paws training is provided free of charge.

Donations provide support for the rescue dog fees, training equipment, veterinary treatments, dog food and team training. They have received a \$20,000 donation from Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services charity Boomer's Legacy. Then a local business, Lighthouse Veterinary Hospital donated the riding ring on their property, normally used to train horses, which is the perfect venue to provide training in a safe, physically distanced environment.

For more information about Operation Freedom Paws Canada (CRA charity 772042735) and how to support them visit <https://ofpcanada.org> or phone 250-954-5552.



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Sailor serves as an extra on Promises

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

A sailor from HMCS Edmonton says serving as an extra in the filming of a Second World War movie was an excellent way to celebrate his family's military service.

SLt Mehak Dhinsa travelled to Kelowna, B.C., Oct. 31 to take part in the opening phase of filming for the historical drama *Promises*. The short film is the work of Surrey-based historian Steven Purewal. It highlights the contribution made by Sikh soldiers to the Allied war effort, and specifically at the Battle of Monte Casino in Italy.

SLt Dhinsa, who is Sikh, has a strong family connection to Second World War including the Burma campaign. It involved the Allies and China teaming up in a series of battles against the Imperial forces of Japan between 1941 and 1945, to overturn Japanese occupation, but at a horrific cost to military and civilian life.

His great grandfathers and other family members fought in the Second World War conquest and some of them were killed after an air raid by the Japanese.

"Many Canadians are unaware of the importance of the Burma Campaign - in 2014 it was voted the most important battle of WW2 by readers of a broadsheet newspaper in the



UK. I thought this was an excellent way to honour their legacy."

The sailor was one of two military members participating in the shoot, with the other an army reservist, Capt Charan Kamal Singh Dullat from Calgary. It was the first film production for him that included a brief speaking role.

Promises explores the active role of Sikh soldiers during the Second World War and subsequent post war discrimination against Sikh veterans and Indian immigrants in Canada. The film depicts the battle of Monte Cassino, in which the Indian 4th Infantry Division was attached to the British Eighth Army that included the Canadians.

The battle took place on a bombed out, rubble-ridden hillside in Central Italy in early 1944. The Allies suffered an estimated 55,000 casualties with soldiers from India, the United Kingdom, France, Poland, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa giving their lives. An estimated 20,000 Germans were also killed and wounded during the assault.

"If the Indian Army hadn't pitched in, the battle would have had markedly different results. But it's also important to remember that everyone contributed to the war effort and that it was a complete unified effort and it took a remarkable team effort to turn the tide against Nazi Germany."

Purewal and his film crew will continue to film *Promises* into the new year but plan a tribute trailer to be released for Remembrance Day 2021.



*At the Going Down of the Sun and
in the morning,
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GRUELLING RESCUE IN THE HIGH ARCTIC

Canadian Forces transport aircraft
CC-130H Hercules 322.

Photo: Werner Fiscdick



Sharon Adams
Legion Magazine

On Oct. 30, 1991, the Canadian Forces transport aircraft CC-130H Hercules 322 left Greenland on a routine airlift of supplies to the isolated Canadian Forces Station Alert, an electronic listening post on the northeastern tip of Ellesmere Island in Canada's High Arctic.

Everything - personnel, food, supplies, fuel - had to be airlifted into the station, situated 817 kilometres from the North Pole, far north of any settlement.

Flight Boxtop 22 was scheduled to arrive at the Alert airfield in the dark at 4:30 p.m. On board were a crew of five, 13 passengers, and 3,400 litres of diesel fuel.

When the airport lights came into view, Captain John Couch started his descent for the runway. He

was less than 10 minutes from the airfield when he radioed that the aircraft was in trouble.

The aircraft crashed into the tundra, invisible in the darkness, and broke into three pieces. The fuel tank shattered, showering everything and everyone with fuel, which caught fire.

No distress call was heard by CFS Alert radio operators, but another aircraft following on saw fire on the ground east of Alert. Rescuers travelling from Alert in all-terrain vehicles spotted green flares, but the weather worsened; the temperature plummeted to -30°C with winds of 50 kilometres per hour, gusting to 80. Rescuers were in a whiteout, in conditions too dangerous to continue.

Airborne rescuers responded from across Canada, Alaska, and Greenland. The first of the

emergency flights was due to arrive about 10 hours after the crash. Several had to turn back due to weather. When the first rescue flight arrived at 2:39 a.m., high winds prevented search-and-rescue technicians from parachuting to the crash site.

Despite suffering a broken ankle in the crash, Captain Wilma Degroot, a doctor from CFB Trenton, started treating the cuts, broken bones, and burns of the other survivors, reported Tom Fennel in a November 1991 article in Maclean's. Soon she was also treating hypothermia, as the bitter cold began penetrating the arctic survival suits everyone was wearing.

Finally, roughly 40 hours after the crash, search-and-rescue technicians reached

the downed aircraft. The first ones in dropped titanium flares and "the pilot quickly moved the rescue aircraft to an altitude of 1,500 feet, where a six-man medical crew, dressed in orange survival suits, parachuted into the teeth of a howling wind," according to Fennel. A second crew followed soon after, many sustaining minor injuries.

After nearly driving into a deep ravine during the whiteout, a ground team arrived about two hours later and provided warm shelter for the survivors. At one point, 26 rescuers were on site. The final survivor was airlifted from the site by 8:15 p.m. on Nov. 1, after a rescue operation lasting 51 hours and 45 minutes. Five had been killed in the crash, including Couch, whose body was found strapped into his seat in the cockpit.



The Boxtop 22 monument commemorates five lives lost in the CC-130 Hercules crash on Oct. 30, 1991.

Photo: Jill St. Marseille/RCAF

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Box of memories

THRIFT STORE DISCOVERY

Sharon Adams
 Legion Magazine

In early March 2019, a large number of military artifacts from a little-known Canadian engagement was nearly lost to history.

A boxful of photos and documents, leftovers from an estate sale, ended up donated to a Goodwill store in Port Colborne, ON. They recognized their historic importance and turned them over to the Niagara Military Museum.

"It's a treasure trove," said Jim Doherty, president of the museum.

Inside the box were artifacts documenting the deployment of Colonel Frank Campbell to Vietnam in 1973. He was a member of the International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS) delegation. A briefcase, albums, documents, photographs, and mementoes of his military career were in the box.

When the United States withdrew from Vietnam, it asked Canada to participate in the ICCS, which also included delegations from Hungary, Poland, and Indonesia.

Canada's 240-strong military contingent in the ICCS was there to enforce a ceasefire, the withdrawal of troops, and the dismantling of military bases in South Vietnam. Campbell served as a regional commander. After an ICCS helicopter carrying Captain Charles Laviolette was shot down in April 1973, Canada pulled out, effective July 31, 1973.

During those six months in Vietnam, there were some 18,000 violations of the ceasefire, resulting in 76,000

killed and missing. The Canadians had come to supervise a ceasefire, and ended up observing a war.

Campbell was exasperated with the ICCS bureaucratic observer status, said Donald Kirk in *Tell It To The Dead: Memories of a War*.

"We shouldn't be waiting for complaints," Campbell told Kirk. "We should just pile into our jeeps and make our presence known."

Kirk describes Campbell as "tall, greying, cautious, rule-bound...who preferred to engage in gentle persuasion, careful review of the terms of the agreement, and exposition of the facts."

A cursory examination of the box's contents allowed Doherty to piece together a bit of information on Campbell. He apparently joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in the 1960s, served in Goose Bay, N.L., and Germany, among other places.

Many of the pictures Campbell collected during his assignment in Vietnam captured ordinary life of Vietnamese people, some working in the fields, as well as Canadian soldiers and their translators at work and leisure.

Campbell kept meticulous notes. Some documents appeared to be first drafts of official communications, with some sections scratched out and rewritten.



The posting to Vietnam was apparently Campbell's last.

A newspaper article from May 16, 1974, noted that Campbell, 50, was facing mandatory retirement at 53 and had "decided to put his knowledge of Vietnam to humanitarian use."

He "is returning there this month to care for 6,500 Vietnamese children and their families," taking over as director of Foster Parents Plan Inc.

The box contains the sort of collection that could result in a museum display, but not likely at the museum in Niagara.

"We are looking for a long-term home for the artifacts," said Doherty.

The museum concentrates on military history of the Niagara region, and while Doherty retired there and lived for a time in the area, his military career was elsewhere.



"This is part of Canadian military history that very few people know anything about."

Jim Doherty,
 Niagara Military Museum

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Discarded Medals

FIND A HOME

Sharon Adams
Legion Magazine

It is, unfortunately, so easy for a veteran's service and sacrifice to be forgotten.

Many veterans may not tell their stories; perhaps to avoid painful memories or to

spare loved ones from experiencing, even second-hand, the horrors of war. So this chapter in the family history, and its importance, may not be passed along.

Perhaps that's how some First World War medals were nearly consigned to the rub-

bish heap in Winnipeg in the early 2000s.

A family clearing out an apartment after a death put out boxes of unwanted stuff and invited other residents to help themselves. One neighbour picked out a small box containing a crest with the initials KOSB, and four medals, three from the First World War. Mistakenly discarded, he thought, but a family member told him they were not wanted. He kept them, not knowing what else to do with them.

Twelve years later, he chanced to meet Dave Flannigan, then Dominion President of The Royal Canadian Legion. He told Flannigan the story and handed over the medals.

The medals were earned by Private Robert Speirs McClymont of the King's Own Scottish Borderers (KOSB), which traces its history back to 1689.

They included a 1914-15



Star, a British War Medal, and a Victory Medal 1914-1919, a trio that was nicknamed Pip, Squeak and Wilfred, after characters in a popular comic strip of the day.

The fourth medal, the Imperial Service Medal, was awarded in the 1950s to civil servants retiring after 25 years of service.

Research by *Legion Magazine* took the story a little further. A Robert Speirs McClymont was born in Minnigaff, Scotland, in 1894. Someone by that name enlisted in the KOSB in the Dumfries and Galloway area. He was given the regimental number 909.

"Unfortunately, very few records of the territorial battalions have survived," said Ian D. Martin of the KOSB Regimental Museum. "So, the key to their numbering systems has been lost."

And with it, the date McClymont enlisted.

His medals card shows he landed at Gallipoli with the KOSB's 5th (Dumfries & Galloway) Battalion on June 10, 1915. That battalion was mobilized in August 1914.

In January 1916, the battalion deployed to Egypt, where McClymont subsequently transferred to the Imperial Camel Corps and later to the Corps of Hussars. A posting on *greatwarforum.org* notes he was wounded April 19, 1917, in the Second Battle of Gaza.

Flannigan is bringing McClymont's story back to life. He recounts it whenever he speaks at schools in Newfoundland and Labrador and at Legion events across the country.

"I started to think about all the events that had to happen for me to get the medals," he said. "This gentleman has nothing to do with me, but I feel like this veteran has adopted me as curator of his remembrance."



Three of Private Robert Speirs McClymont's medals are, from left: the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal 1914-1919. Together they are affectionately called Pip, Squeak and Wilfred.

Alamy Cartoon credit top right: Trinity Mirror/Mirrorpix/Alamy Stock/B4w9hd



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Aboriginal Veteran AND HIS FAMILY OF SERVICE

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

When 92-year-old PO1 (Retired) Victor Flett bows his head in a moment of silence on Remembrance Day, he will think of beloved family members who served Canada honourably.

He is the last in line of three generations from Manitoba's Peguis First Nation to serve in Canada's military. The members of Peguis First Nation are of Saultaux (Ojibway) and Cree descent.

His Grandfather, whom he never met, is a source of immense pride and pain for him and his family. That's because Pte David William Stranger, an infantryman in the Canadian Army, was killed at the Battle of Vimy Ridge in the First World War.

"It was very sad for us that he was not there when I was young; this stands out most for me in my memories of my family and life," says Flett. "Even though I never met him, his memory made me very aware of the sacrifice put into defending the freedoms of our country, pride in being Canadian, and being able to serve his country the way he did."

Flett's father Edward, also a soldier, served as infantry in the final months of the First World War.

At age three, Flett's mother died of TB and his grandmother, a widow who raised seven children of her own, took in him and his five siblings and raised them on his grandfather's land. She was a great source of strength with her strong and enduring faith in God and lifelong membership of Saint Peter's Old Stone Church near Selkirk, MB, says Flett.

As grown men, Flett and his brothers joined the military, with three serving Canada during the Second World War.

His oldest brother Andrew worked as a marine engineer in the Merchant Navy during the Battle of the Atlantic. His other brother George was a Royal Canadian Air Force gunner in Lancaster Bombers. His brother closest in age, David was in the army and landed on the beaches of Normandy as a member of the Royal Regina Rifles. All of them made it home after the war.

Flett served his 33-year-career in the Royal Canadian Navy. He served aboard one of eight destroyers deployed to Korea, HMCS Crusader.

As a young Able Seaman he worked in the destroyer as a Sonarman. His ship was involved in the bombardment of Chinese positions, and after the cease fire was signed, they worked to protect South Korean navy vessels involved in mine-sweeping operations. After the war, he went on to serve in two cruisers, multiple destroyers and one frigate, which trained junior officers in navigation and anchorage.

He says he truly enjoyed his service, especially exploring Canada's West Coast for the first time in his life.

"As a young man from Manitoba, I marvelled at the beautiful coastline and also the Salish Coast people who lived there; for me it was heaven on earth."

Following his service in the Canadian Armed Forces, Flett worked as a Commissionaire at CFB Esquimalt and various locations around Victoria.

He has three children, seven grandchildren, and six great grandchildren.

On Remembrance Day, at his retirement home Amica on the Gorge, he will read aloud the poem *In Flanders Fields* and the *Oath of Remembrance* over the public address system. It's a moment, says Flett, he is looking forward to.

"When I read these passages, I will be thinking of my grandfather and all the members of Canada's military who served their country with pride and distinction."



PO1 (Retired) Victor Flett, 2012.



PO1 Victor Flett, 1982.



Grandfather Pte David William Stranger.



Father Pte Edward Flett.



HMCS Crusader, the destroyer that Victor Flett served in during the Korean War.

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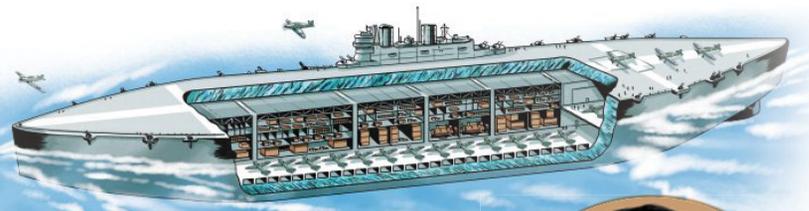
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The cool idea that sank



It's "another of those mad, wild schemes [that started] with a couple of crazy men in England."

– Prime Minister Mackenzie

Sharon Adams
Legion Magazine

Aircraft carriers were a great innovation in protecting convoys out of range of land airbases during the Second World War. But aluminum and steel needed to build them were in great demand. Geoffrey Pyke, a researcher with Britain's Combined Operations Headquarters, wondered if

another material could be used.

He knew how difficult it was to destroy an iceberg and he wondered about placing an airfield on the levelled top of a berg?

Problem was only about 10 per cent of an iceberg is above the surface, so one large enough to accommodate a runway would need hundreds of metres of ice below water, and it would be impossible to tow.

Enter pykrete, a mixture of water and wood pulp that proved amazingly strong

after freezing. Invented by polymer chemists but named for Pyke, it melted slowly and could be shaped like the wood or metal to build, say, an aircraft carrier.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was an enthusiastic supporter.

Where to test out the feasibility of the project? Why Canada, of course, with its cold winters and researchers familiar with ice science. The project was named after Old Testament prophet Habakkuk, who was told to watch for a wonder "which ye would not believe."

The National Research Council was assigned to build a prototype in Patricia Lake, near Jasper, AB. After the scale model measuring 18 by 9 metres and weighing 1,000 tonnes was completed in 1943, the Canadian War Committee allocated \$1 million to build a full-scale carrier to be ready in 1944.

Canada had the raw materials needed: 300,000 tonnes of wood pulp, 25,000 tonnes of fibreboard insulation, 35,000 tonnes of timber and 10,000 tonnes of steel. The British Admiralty initially estimated the construction cost of the "bergship" at about £700,000 (C\$1.2 million), compared to about \$70 million for a conventional carrier of the day.

But a prototype was one thing, a 610-metre-long colossus another. The British wish list included:

- a speed of seven knots
- a 30-metre-long rudder
- a range of 11,000 kilometres
- a hull impervious to torpedoes
- a runway for heavy bombers

It would need a refrigerated hull 12 metres thick to keep the pykrete frozen.

Canadian engineers estimated it would take five

years to build, pull thousands of workers from other war work, and require much more lumber, concrete, pykrete, and ice than the British estimated. There were technical questions to figure out, like how to control a 30-metre rudder. Plus, they warned it could cost about \$100 million to build.

At the same time, other means of dealing with U-boat alley had developed. Airfields in the Azores opened to Allied aircraft and the British developed larger fuel tanks for longer flights, improved radar accuracy, and completed more aircraft carriers.

In May 1943, the pykrete project ended.

The prototype slowly melted and sank to the bottom of Patricia Lake. Divers can still spot the wreckage today.

Geoffrey Pyke came up with the idea of making a gigantic aircraft carrier mostly from ice.

Illustrations by Joel Kimmel



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Second World War veteran Bob Gondek.



Veteran's story of loss and recovery

Courtesy War Amps

On Remembrance Day this year, many Canadians will reflect on the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Among those will be war amputee veteran Bob Gondek, of Toronto, who also carries a physical reminder of that pivotal time in history.

At the age of 96, Gondek still vividly recalls serving alongside the Allied Forces with the 2nd Polish Corps during the Italian Campaign.

"We were climbing a hill, heavily laden with equipment carried by mules," he says. "Germans were above and could easily see us. Their machine gun fire pinned us to the ground. We had to deal with completely unknown terrain and extreme darkness. Finally, I found a soft spot where I could seek temporary shelter. In the morning, I realized I was laying on corpses, buried in shallow graves."

In 1944, he was based outside Loretto, Italy, when heavy gun fire broke out.

"Without any order, I crawled up to them [the

enemy] and threw a grenade. I acted instinctively."

After a short period of silence, the enemy began firing mortars.

"I remember an explosion and the smell of gunpowder. I then realized that my weapon was gone and, in the place where my hand held the machine gun, there was nothing – I had lost part of my left arm below the elbow. I felt like I was dying because my whole life flashed before my eyes."

Gondek also had extensive injuries around his leg and hip and spent five months recovering in the hospital.

He was awarded the Virtuti Militari, the Polish equivalent of the Victoria Cross, for his valour in destroying two enemy machine gun nests. He also received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta from Poland, the Cross of Valour, Merit Cross, Second Corps Army Medal and Monte Cassino Commemorative Cross.

In 1954, he immigrated to Canada where he became a member of The War Amps,

an Association originally started by amputee veterans returning from the First World War to help each other adapt to their new reality as amputees.

He has dedicated a lifetime of service to The War Amps, holding various positions within the Association. He also became an inspiration to other amputees, showing them that an amputation is not a barrier to living a full and active life.

"You have to teach by example. I don't have an arm, but I enjoyed playing golf."

Over the years, Gondek has helped educate the younger generation about the horrors of war by going to schools and giving speeches to students. For the last 50 years on Remembrance Day, he has also laid a wreath to honour his comrades.

"I'm grateful that I have been able to take part in these ceremonies. It's important to me that I pay tribute to my fellow veterans and all those who lost their lives."

In remembrance of all our veterans.
And in memory of our very own John Madsen,
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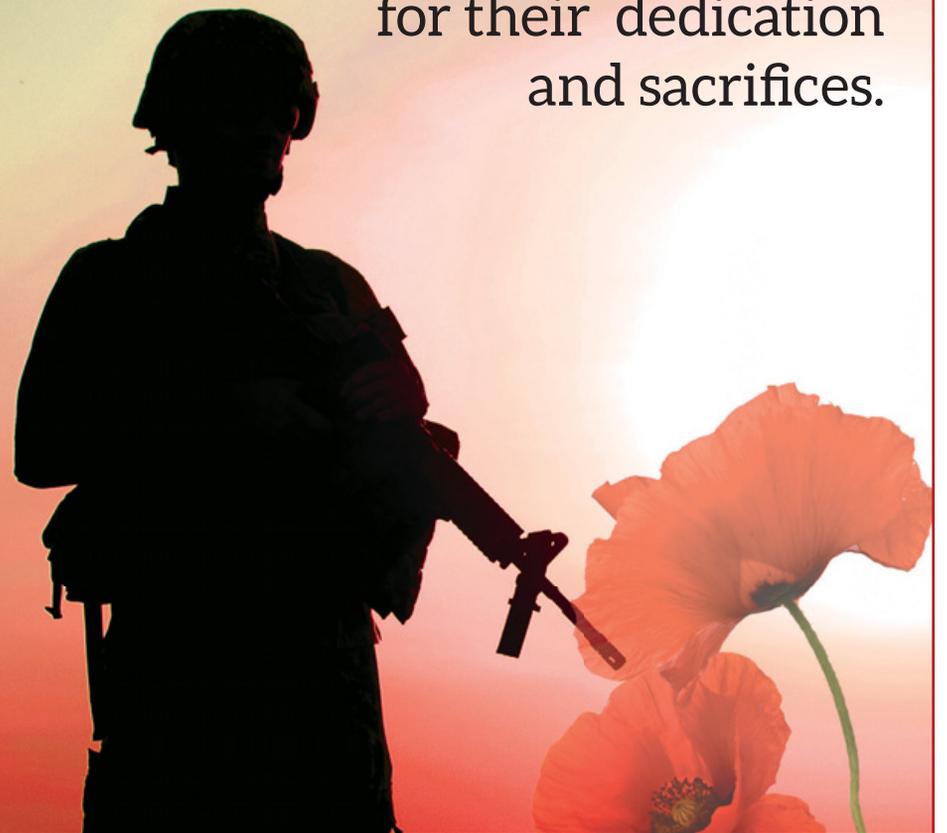
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Who sunk U-484?

Sharon Adams
Legion Magazine

The history of U-484 is short, and not so sweet.

Commissioned on Jan. 19, 1944, the submarine travelled to Norway to join the German 3rd flotilla in early August under command of Korvettenkapitän Wolf-Axel Schaefer.

Its first and only patrol began on Aug. 18.

The sub passed through a gap separating Iceland and the Faroe Islands and headed for the Hebrides, where it was sunk on Sept. 9. All 52 aboard perished.

But who sank the sub?

That depends on what you read and where and when it was written.

An Royal Canadian Air Force Sunderland flying boat piloted by J.N. Farren spotted whitish vapour or steam and a 30-metre wake indicating a submarine. It dropped eight

depth charges, then called in HMCS Hespeler and HMCS Dunver, on patrol south of the Hebrides.

"The original postwar analysis credited the Sunderland's attack with the probable sinking of U-484," wrote Brereton Greenhous et al in *The Crucible of War*, the official history of the Royal Canadian Navy, in 1994. "In retrospect, it seems far more likely that the German submarine was sunk by HMCS Dunver and HMCS Hespeler."

But a few years later, the credit was transferred to two British ships, HMS Portchester Castle and HMS Helmsdale. Those ships had originally been credited that same day with sinking U-743 northwest of Ireland, a U-boat reported missing on Sept. 10.

In 1997, Royal Navy historian R.N. Coppock reported he had found evidence suggesting the British ships had not sunk U-743, but U-484 instead. The historian went through Allied and Kriegsmarine records,

adding four kills to the Royal Canadian Navy tally, and transferring credit for the sinking of U-484 to the Royal Navy. U-743 was deemed lost from unknown causes.

Canadian ships were believed to have attacked "a non-submarine target." Such attacks were apparently fairly common. "[A]ircraft routinely attacked any williwaw [small waterspout], whale, oil slick, or piece of flotsam that an active imagination could possibly construe as evidence of a submarine," says Greenhous et al.

In the final months of 1944, one squadron had seven "sightings of the 'smoke and wake' type that were undoubtedly whirlwinds or spouting whales." Four were attacked.

In 2008, purported unpublished diary entries of a Hespeler sailor posted on a SUBSIM Radio Room online forum seem to support the Canadian claim: "(9/9/44) we left at 0015 and two hours later picked up a contact and went to

'action stat.' We dropped one pattern and nothing happened. The second caused explosions. Nothing the third. Fourth caused explosions and the fifth brought something up which the Dunver said was a sub. We secured at 4:30 a.m.... (9/10/44) Tons of oil, wreckage, and bodies about."

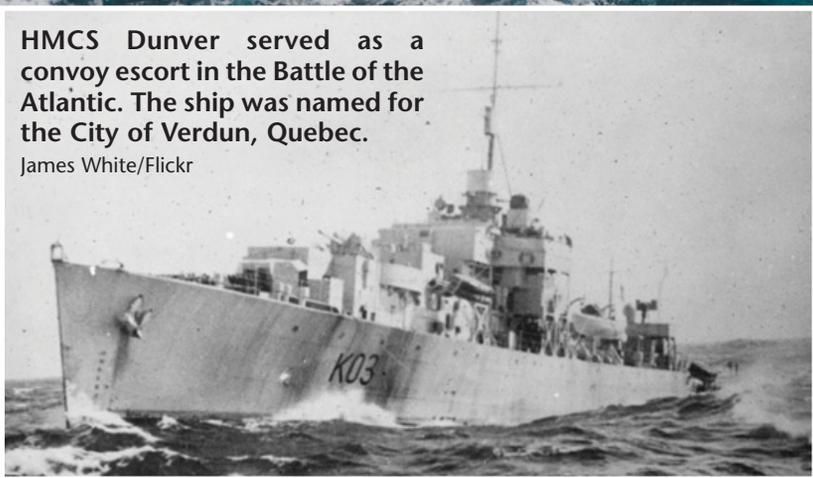
In a 2013 article in *Starshell*, the Naval Association of Canada magazine, retired navy commander Fraser McKee credits the Canadian ships with the sinking, noting the RN disputes the sinking "but without any better claim than the RCN's."

Many online sites credit the British ships with sinking U-484. The U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command has a question mark after its entry crediting the Canadian ships. The online RCN history site credits Hespeler and Dunver.

It would take strong new evidence to put an end to the disagreement.

HMCS Dunver served as a convoy escort in the Battle of the Atlantic. The ship was named for the City of Verdun, Quebec.

James White/Flickr



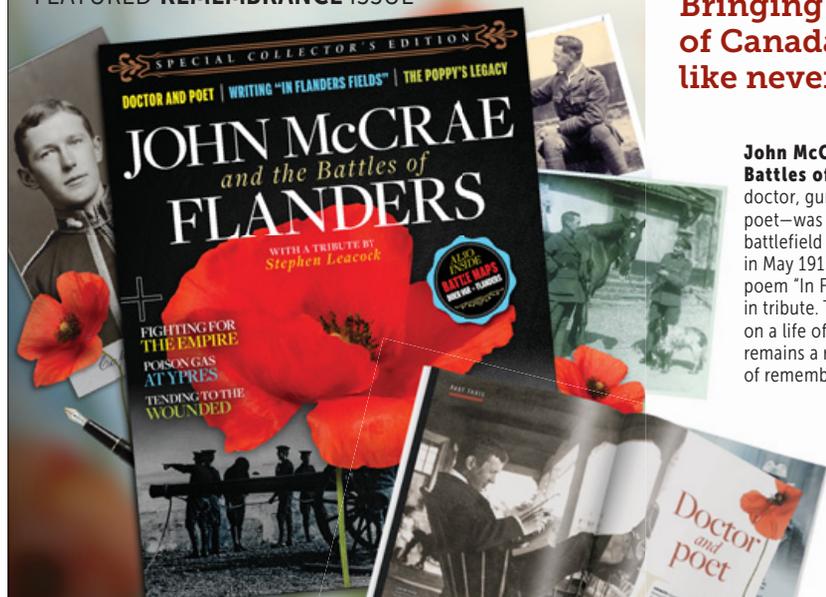
HMCS Hespeler in 1944.

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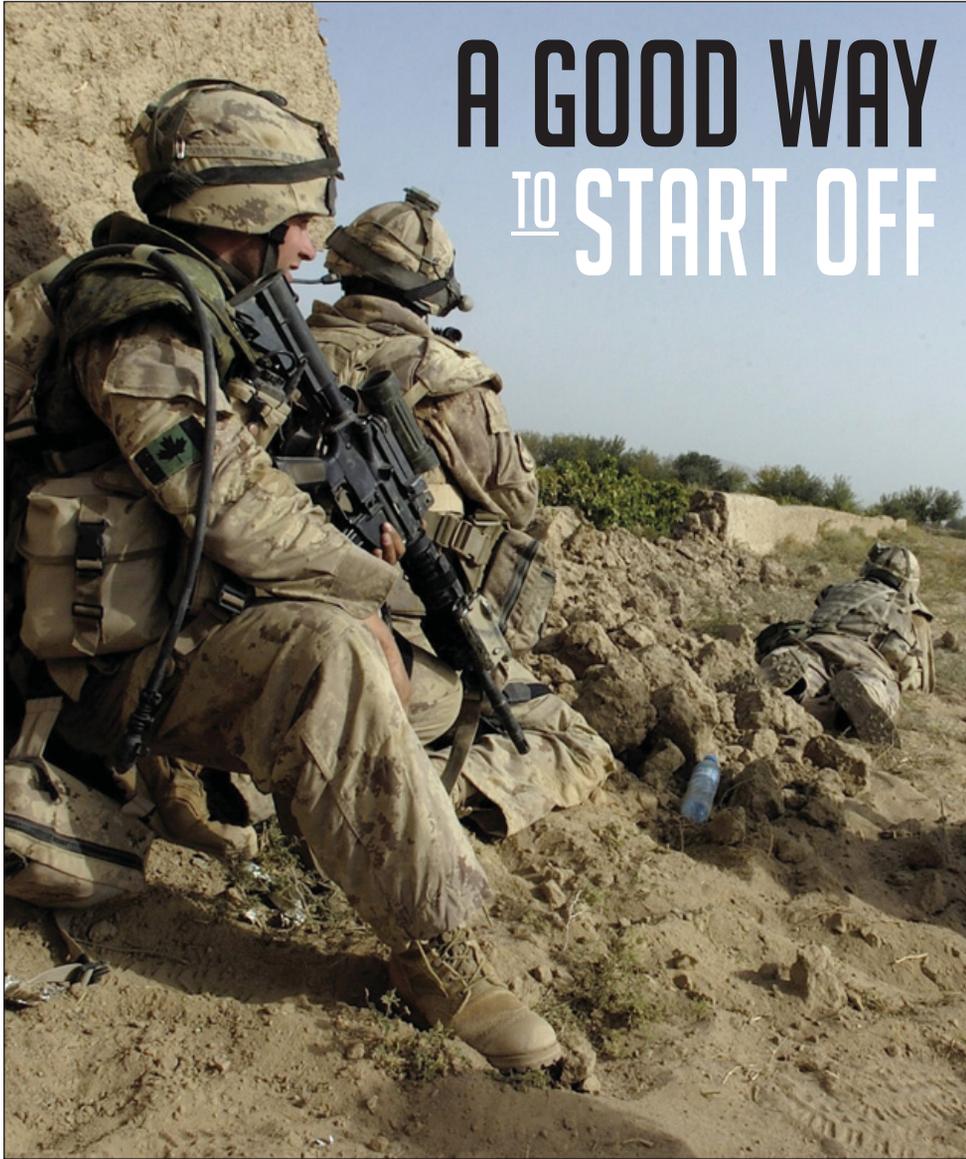
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CANADA'S ULTIMATE STORY



A GOOD WAY TO START OFF

Members of the 1st Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment, deployed in the second phase of Operation Athena in August 2006. Combat Camera/AR2006-G007-0071

Sharon Adams Legion Magazine

In Afghanistan in August 2006, the Taliban wanted to take back their spiritual home in a massive attack on the City of Kandahar, but their plans were disrupted by nearby troop movements around a Canadian change of command.

Shrapnel from a mortar shell peppered Lieutenant-Colonel Omer Lavoie's vehicle during a familiarization tour near Masum Ghar, a peak about 30 kilometres from Kandahar.

On Aug. 19 -Afghan Independence Day - Lavoie took command and set out to locate and eliminate the mortar that had been harassing Canadian troops and Afghan security forces. He sent Major Mike Wright, in command of five LAVs and an assortment of utility vehicles, to locate and neutralize the mortar on Masum Ghar.

"The Taliban, seeing our vehicles up on our hill and not liking the idea, decided to launch a fairly significant attack," Lavoie said in the September 2007 issue of *Legion Magazine*.

He received a message that 300 to 500 insurgents were attacking. Masum Ghar was the prized high

ground during a prolonged firefight.

"My LAV gunner was firing at a rock formation where we could see a guy skirting back and forth where the police had been," said Wright in Murray Brewster's *The Savage War: The Untold Battles of Afghanistan*. The gunner saw "Taliban in waves trying to get up to the top of Masum Ghar."

"I heard a 'whoosh.' I looked up and I could actually see the RPG flying by," Wright is quoted in *In Their Own Words: Canadian Stories of Valour and Bravery from Afghanistan, 2001-2007*. It was coming from an area that was supposed to be an Afghan police observation post.

Wright had expected only to be giving support to Afghan troops and police. Now he found himself in a firefight with a superior force of Taliban fighters.

He sent Captain Mike Reekie's LAV crew to cover the south. Reekie went farther than expected in order to see over a rise in the road, from where, said Wright "he was able to stop the main wave of the attack."

"The Taliban were coming from our south and they were sweeping up the mountain on our flank, put-

ting themselves in a position higher than our forces," said Reekie.

He moved to cut off their access up the mountain.

"Yes, there were six of us and we would be put in greater danger. But there were 45 soldiers on the other side of the hill that would be in much greater danger."

So his crew turned back to back, and began firing at the Taliban surrounding them.

"We were in a situation where we were fighting 360 degrees.... I did not honestly think that we would come out of that situation alive and it was only due to the skill of our crew that we did."

Hampered by an equipment malfunction, LAV driver Corporal Chad Chevrefils opened the hatch and stuck out his head, "exposing himself to fire to let the guys know who to aim for!" said Wright.

As the Canadians waited for the dawn, the Taliban melted away in the night.

"In the end we killed about 100 Taliban and took no friendly casualties, so it was a good way to start off," said Lavoie.

Wright, Reekie, and Chevrefils received the Medal of Military Valour.



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“A splendid boy”

THOMAS RICKETTS

Sharon Adams, Legion Magazine



Thomas (Tommy) Ricketts was destined to become a hero before his 18th birthday.

He was a sturdy lad who had worked from an early age beside his fisherman father, and therefore not asked for proof of his birthdate when he followed in the footsteps of his brother George and joined the Newfoundland Regiment in September 1916 at the age of 15.

Private Ricketts was a seasoned soldier by the time the Hundred Days Offensive began in 1918. Sent to the front in July 1917, he went over the top at the Battle of Langemarck in August, and fought at the Battle of Poelcappelle in October. In November, he was wounded early on in the First Battle of Cambrai, which claimed his brother in December.

After recuperating, Ricketts returned to the front in the spring of 1918, rejoining comrades in what was now the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in the attack on Keiberg Ridge at the end of September.

On Oct. 14, 1918, his battalion was less than 200 metres in front of the forward artillery that fired the first shots of the Battle of Courtrai at 5:35 a.m.

The battalion crossed a deep stream, then advanced about a kilo-

metre, enduring heavy shelling and machine-gun fire. Ricketts and Lance Corporal Matthew Brazil were the only unwounded members of their platoon.

Lieutenant Stanley Newman, in consultation with Captain Sydney Frost, volunteered to lead a platoon, now including Ricketts and Brazil, to outflank the German strongpoint. About 100 metres short of the enemy, they were pinned down by enemy fire.

Brazil and Ricketts volunteered to continue the advance on their own. Carrying a Lewis gun, they moved forward in spurts, dropping some magazine carriers as they came under heavy fire from machine guns and snipers.

They nearly came under friendly fire, too, wrote Frank Gogos in *Newfoundland's Reluctant War Hero: Thomas Ricketts, V.C., C. de G.*

Brigadier-General John Jack investigated why the advance stalled, came upon Frost's men and, mistaking Ricketts and Brazil for the enemy, prepared to shoot them, until another officer pointed out "that the general was about to shoot his own troops," wrote Gogos.

Ricketts and Brazil ran out of ammunition within 300 metres of the enemy stronghold.

Ricketts ran back about 100 metres to retrieve the magazine carriers.

"The way it was with me was that I was determined that I would this time get them or they would get me," he said in an interview with the *Evening Telegram* in 1919.

Ricketts retrieved the ammunition but became the focus of German fire on the return trip.

"How he managed to dodge the fire from four German machine guns and an artillery piece firing point blank, concentrating their fire solely on him was nothing short of miraculous," wrote Gogos.

Four field guns, four machine guns, and eight prisoners were captured. By the end of the day, the Regiment had taken 500 prisoners, 94 machine guns, and eight field guns.

The bravery earned Ricketts a Victoria Cross.

King George V arranged for a private investiture and presented the medal himself, notes Gogos. The King wrote in his diary the next day "Yesterday I gave the V.C. to Private Ricketts, Newfoundland Regiment, who is only 17½ now, a splendid boy."

Ricketts was promoted to sergeant before returning home to Newfoundland, where he took advantage of an education fund, qualified as a pharmacist, married and raised a family. He died in 1967.



“HOW HE MANAGED TO DODGE THE FIRE FROM FOUR GERMAN MACHINE GUNS AND AN ARTILLERY PIECE FIRING POINT BLANK, CONCENTRATING THEIR FIRE SOLELY ON HIM WAS NOTHING SHORT OF MIRACULOUS.”

On Remembrance Day We Salute our Nation's Heroes Both past and present



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THE FLYING FOX

TAKES OUT THE DESERT FOX

Charley Fox

Don Gillmor
Legion Magazine

Charley Fox grew up in Guelph, ON, and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in the spring of 1940. He initially worked as a flight instructor but finally saw action in 1943 as a lieutenant with No. 412 Squadron, whose duties included bomber escort and dive-bombing, where they strafed enemy targets. Flying Spitfires, Fox was a deadly marksman. In the course of his

two-year flying career, he destroyed or damaged 153 vehicles, many of them trains, and several enemy aircraft. But dive-bombing the enemy came with risks; in 222 operational flights, the planes he flew were damaged 14 times from enemy ground fire, usually badly enough for them to be considered unusable.

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, he flew three operational sorties over Normandy, protecting ships and men.

His most famous exploit happened in France on July 17, 1944, flying from the coastal Allied air base

at Bénny-sur-Mer.

"I saw this staff [car] coming along between a line of trees on a main road," Fox recalled. "I did a diving curving attack and started firing at some 300 yards. I saw bullets hitting the car."

What he didn't know was that German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel - "the Desert Fox" - was in the car. Rommel had come to France to help prepare for the Allied invasion. A bullet wounded the driver and he drove the car off the road. Rommel was thrown out of the open

car and hit a tree, fracturing his skull.

Rommel was later linked to a plot to assassinate Hitler, and when the plot was uncovered, the Gestapo rounded up more than 7,000 people, Rommel among them. They executed 4,980 of the prisoners. Because Rommel was a national hero, he was given the choice of a public trial that would certainly end in his execution, or committing suicide, leaving his war record intact. On Oct. 14, Rommel took a cyanide pill. The public was told

he had died of his injuries from the car accident, and he was given a state funeral.

Fox's tour of duty ended in January 1945. After the war, he remained in the RCAF, with No. 420 Air Reserve Squadron, retiring in 1956.

In those years after the war, he didn't talk much about what had happened overseas or his own heroic part in it. Few people knew that he was the man who'd taken Rommel out of the war. But in the last decade of his life, Fox embraced his military past.

He founded Torch Bearers, a non-profit organization that educated youth about the Canadian military. He appeared in schools and lobbied school boards to make sure Remembrance Day ceremonies were held every November.

On Oct. 18, 2008, he was driving near Tillsonburg, ON, when a driver ran a stop sign and collided with his car killing him. He was 88 years old.

In the course of his illustrious flying career, Fox received the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar.

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Canadian soldier of the Second World War identified

National Defence / Canadian Armed Forces

The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces have identified the grave of a Canadian soldier of the Second World War as that of Trooper Henry George Johnston. Trooper Johnston was buried as an unknown soldier in 1945 in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Mook War Cemetery in the Netherlands.

He was born on May 2, 1915, in Chauvin, Alberta. He enlisted at No. 13 District Depot as a General Reinforcement in October 1943 in Calgary. After training in Ontario, he embarked for the United Kingdom on June 25, 1944, arriving on July 3, 1944. He was taken on strength by the 1 Armoured Personnel Carrier Regiment, Canadian Armoured Corps, Canadian Active Service Force, on Nov. 12, 1944. Trooper Johnston was declared killed in action on Jan. 17, 1945, during an attack in which his Regiment was carrying members of the Devonshire Regiment, a regiment of the British Army, as part of Operation Blackcock.

The Canadian Armed Forces have notified surviving next of kin of Trooper Johnston's identification and have provided the family with ongoing support. A headstone rededication ceremony will take place at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Mook War Cemetery in Limburg, Netherlands, at the earliest opportunity.

Casualty Identification Program

The Canadian Armed Forces' Casualty Identification Program, within the Directorate of History and Heritage, identifies unknown Canadian service members when their remains are recovered and there is sufficient evidence to identify them by name.

The program also identifies service members previously buried as unknown soldiers when there is sufficient historical and archival evidence to confirm the identification. When that is the case, the previously unknown soldier receives a new headstone with their name, unit affiliation, and a personal family inscription, if that is requested.

The Casualty Identification Review Board is composed of members of the Directorate of History and Heritage, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Canadian Forces Forensic Odontology Response Team, and the Canadian Museum of History.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission commemorates the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars. Using an extensive archive, the Commission works with their partners to recover, investigate, and identify those with no known grave to give them the dignity of burial and the commemoration they deserve.



Digital Remembrance Campaign

This year, Remembrance Day will take on a different form for the first time since Canadians observed it on Nov. 11, 1931.

On the 75th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission is committed to honouring fallen Canadians despite restrictions on traditional Remembrance Day gatherings due to COVID-19.

That's why they are launching #ShineOn, an inclusive, accessible, digital Remembrance event.

To heighten awareness and increase involvement this Remembrance Day, Canadians can take to social media using the hashtag #ShineOn to share memories about fallen family members or friends. There is also a virtual experience on our website to allow people to name stars after commonwealth war dead www.cwgc.org.

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LITTLE KNOWN

RESCUE TUGS

AIDED CONVOYS

Sharon Adams
Legion Magazine

German submariners referred to the period from July to October 1940 as Die Glückliche Zeit, or the Happy Time, when their wolf packs sank more than 280 Allied ships.

It was not too happy for Convoy HX-77.

Between Oct. 11 and 13, a wolf pack targeted its 42 cargo ships, picking off six vessels carrying 35,000 tonnes of supplies and war materiel to the United Kingdom.

At just after 10 p.m. in a gale on Oct. 11, the cargo ship Port Gisborne was hit by a torpedo from U-48 in the North Atlantic, about 180 kilometres off Ireland.

The crew abandoned ship in three lifeboats, but survivors in one boat drowned after it capsized in the storm, bringing the total of dead to 26. The other two lifeboats, carrying 36 crew and one gunner, drifted apart in the storm.

On Oct. 14, survivors in one of Port Gisborne's lifeboats spotted another containing 16 survivors from the same convoy—13 Canadian and three Free French merchant mariners of the steamship Saint-Malô.

A torpedo hit Saint-Malô amidships just after 11:30 p.m. on Oct. 12. The vessel broke in two and sank in half an hour, with the loss of 28 crew.

The Port Gisborne lifeboat took the other in tow and on Oct. 21 Saint-Malô survivors transferred to the other lifeboat.

The next day, rescue tug HMS Salvonia collected the combined

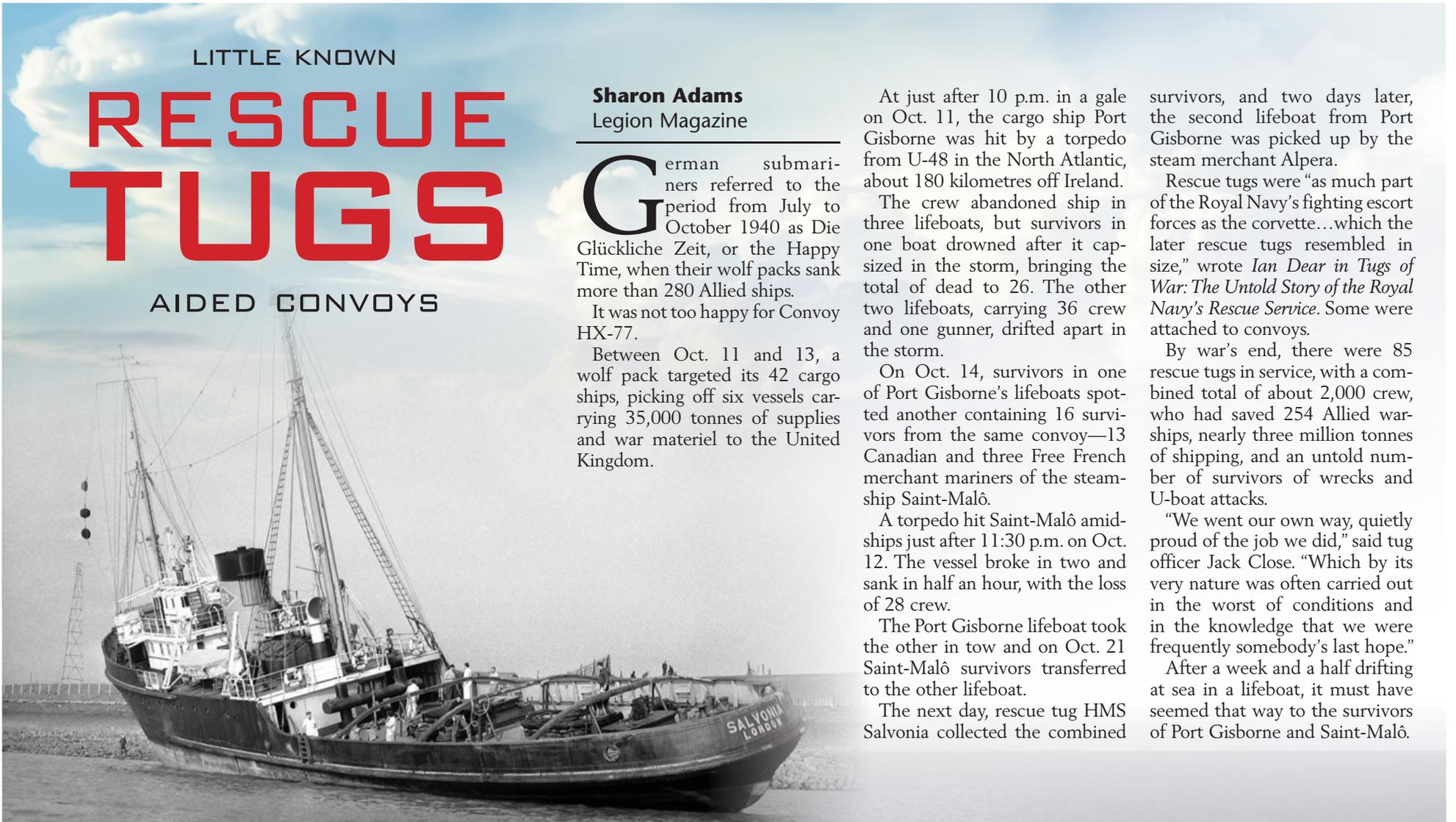
survivors, and two days later, the second lifeboat from Port Gisborne was picked up by the steam merchant Alpera.

Rescue tugs were "as much part of the Royal Navy's fighting escort forces as the corvette...which the later rescue tugs resembled in size," wrote *Ian Dear* in *Tugs of War: The Untold Story of the Royal Navy's Rescue Service*. Some were attached to convoys.

By war's end, there were 85 rescue tugs in service, with a combined total of about 2,000 crew, who had saved 254 Allied warships, nearly three million tonnes of shipping, and an untold number of survivors of wrecks and U-boat attacks.

"We went our own way, quietly proud of the job we did," said tug officer Jack Close. "Which by its very nature was often carried out in the worst of conditions and in the knowledge that we were frequently somebody's last hope."

After a week and a half drifting at sea in a lifeboat, it must have seemed that way to the survivors of Port Gisborne and Saint-Malô.



HMS Salvonia was one of the rescue tugs that collected survivors of the U-boat attack on Convoy HX-77.

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Photos by Sailor 1st Class Sisi Xu, MARPAC Imaging Services



Sailor 3rd class Steven Adams receives his Certificate of Military Achievement on Boatswain Rank Qualification.



Sailor 1st Class Joseph Ashford receives his Certificate of Military Achievement on Boatswain Rank Qualification.



Sailor 3rd Class Matthieu Bolland receives his Certificate of Military Achievement on Boatswain Rank Qualification.



Sailor 3rd Class Andrew Cardin receives his Certificate of Military Achievement on Boatswain Rank Qualification.



Sailor 3rd Class Dean Coates receives his Certificate of Military Achievement on Boatswain Rank Qualification.



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MR. LUBE + TIRES

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

Mr. Lube has revamped its annual Remembrance Day promotion for 2020.

Current serving military members and veterans who drop by their Colwood and Douglas Street locations will receive a 25 per cent discount on oil changes thru the end of November, and a 15 per cent discount on any oil changes thereafter.

Mark Cookson, Owner and Operations Manager of both Mr. Lube locations, acknowledges the current discount represents a significant shift from Mr. Lube's five previous Remembrance Day promotions. The national chain of drive-through automotive service centres began offering free-of-charge oil changes to service members and veterans at its locations across B.C. in 2015.

Cookson says the decision was recently made, albeit regrettably, to suspend the 100 per cent discount due to health and safety concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Last year on Nov. 10, we serviced 207 vehicles free of charge at our two stores," said Cookson. "But having big lines of vehicles in the parking lot and large numbers of people going through our service bays just isn't safe for our customers or our staff members, but we still wanted to give back to the community."

He says offering a further 15 per cent discount to current and former military personnel seemed like the right thing to do. He says Mr. Lube plans to go back to its free oil change promotion next year or when it is safe to do so.

Cookson has 27 years of experience as an Operations Manager at Mr. Lube and says all of his employees truly look forward to their Remembrance Day promotion each year.

"It really is their favourite time of the year because our employees are getting a chance to assist in the effort to give back to the military community," said Cookson. "For me it's a great feeling and encouraging when I see one of our younger workers having a friendly chat with a current serving military member or veteran from our community."



Thank you for your service.

Must present valid Canadian Veteran or Military ID issued by the Government or have a veteran licence plate.
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