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Museum receives Don Cherry donation

Jules Xavier
Shilo Stag

He might have been a plumber as a civilian, but during the Great War acts of bravery on the battlefield did not go unnoticed by his Chain of Command.

Sgt Thomas MacKenzie was awarded the Military Medal (MM), with bar, on Aug. 6, 1918. Eight days later he was wounded for the first time during the 100-day push, but remained on duty.

Photos Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag

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Deadline for submissions is the Thursday prior to the week of publication. Submissions can be sent to the Stag via email at stag@mymts.net, dropped off at the Stag office located in CANEX or via Inter-base mail.

Submitting articles and photos for print:

- Please submit articles as a MS Word Document.
- Include the author's full name, rank, unit and contact information.
- Include photos with your articles whenever possible, however, do not embed photos in word documents.
- Please submit photos as high resolution jpegs (if scanned 300 dpi), digital images or in hard copy format.
- With photos, include a cutline which names the individuals in the photo; what's taking place; and the name, rank, and unit of the photographer.

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Four generations choose artillery for Army job

"What's meant to be will always find a way."

— Trisha Yearwood

Kimberley Kielley

Shilo Stag

The die was cast for a military career in artillery long before CWO (Ret'd) Leon 'Sonny' O'Donnell was even born.

He's the third generation of artillery men in his family — his sons Robert and Joseph, both lieutenant-colonels, are the fourth.

Vernon O'Donnell was Sonny's grandfather and the man who bestowed the nickname on him. He was artillery during the First World War.

Allen O'Donnell, Sonny's father, was also in artillery as a Gunner during two wars.

Sonny joined the CAF on Oct. 6, 1964 and retired in 1997.

He sat relaxed at Garrison Grill reminiscing about a 33-year military career, the path which led him there, his grandfather, father and sons.

He's lived in Cottonwoods for the last 20 years with his wife Sandra, where they raised their children.

The baseball cap where a beret once sat, casually sits on his head. Sonny's usually on the golf course on Base at the crack of dawn. Winter sees him in the GSH gym, but then COVID may have a say in how often he frequents CFB Shilo's recreational facility.

Sonny doesn't smoke or drink either. "I had to quit smoking. I couldn't run. That's when the physical fitness kicked in. I started running 10 kilometres a day. I wanted to do a marathon. Saturday's I'd run 20 kilometres and take Sunday off."

But he won't ski. "If I break a leg now I'm screwed," he confessed.

At 73, Sonny looks like a man 10 years younger.

But Vernon, the man who started the trend to join artillery and not infantry or tank corps, wasn't as enthusiastic towards physical fitness in his later years as Sonny is throughout his military career and in retirement.

"I can remember my grandfather coming downstairs and sitting in his rocking chair by the stove with a can of rolled cigarettes. He never moved from that spot," he recalled.

Vernon O'Donnell was born on Jan. 8, 1895. He was a Teamster and took the attestation oath on April 4, 1917 in Newcastle, NB.

He wasn't a big man. Standing at five-foot-seven, he had a dark complexion, dark brown hair, 20/20 eyesight, and normal hearing. He was deemed fit for service on April 30, 1917, joining 20th Bty CFA DD#7.

He was approved to leave for France, departing Halifax, NS, on the SS Megantic on Nov. 26, 1917.

He wasn't long on British soil having been Taken on Strength (TOS) at Camp Witley for training on Dec. 8, 1917, when he fell ill just over a month later. Maybe it was the damp cold of England or the Trans Atlantic crossing on the coal-burning SS Megantic, but 23-year-old Vernon was ad-

mitted to No. 12 Cdn Gen Hosp in Bramshott, England with influenza on Jan. 9, 1918.

His diagnosis was upgraded to bronchitis and he was discharged on Jan. 19, 1918. By mid-March, he was back in the hospital, this time with mumps.

It took him a month to recover when he was discharged on April 4, 1918. He was posted to 5th Brigade on Aug. 15 and shipped to the field that same day, where the Allies fought on the Western Front.

Sonny's conversations with his grandfather were sparse, due partially to him moving to various Bases with his own family across Canada.

"I was a Base brat," he said proudly.

One conversation he did recall with his grandfather involved the Germans shooting Allied horses.

"He used to get pissed off because back then, everything was horse-driven. You pulled the guns by horse. You pulled the ammo by horse. The Germans used to shoot the horses. Because once you shoot the horse, there goes the gun," he said.

"That's what really pissed him off. They would shoot a person if they could, but they'd shoot the horse because it was bigger. You'd get attached to your animal and some son-of-a-bitch shoots him."

The same attestation papers aren't available for Second World War veterans as are the digitized records for KIA soldiers.

Sonny's recollection of his father's military career included the Second World War and Korean War.

"He was in Italy, up the coast. France and Germany, too. He never really talked about that. And I never really pushed it," he said.

It was after his high school graduation at CFB Gagetown that he made the decision to join the artillery with a buddy in the fall of 1964.

"The fella I hung around with joined artillery. So I went to the [recruiting] office to join. I asked him what he signed up for. He said artillery. Never thinking my grandfather was in artillery, I joined because my friend had joined. I had four choices. Once I got in there, I stayed."

For the next three-plus decades Sonny worked his way up in rank, starting as a Gunner and working his way to the top rung, CWO.

His first posting was at the RCA Depot at CFB Shilo.

"It was my home base where we did basic training for six months at current L25. Then I went to Fort Osborne in Winnipeg for one year."

Next up, CFB Gagetown. Then a posting to Germany on Jan. 7, 1967.

"We left here in a driving snow storm. We went over in a Yukon. It was my first time in an aircraft. We got to Dusseldorf and I look out the window and it's all green. I thought, Holy cow, this is gonna be great."

The Base was Fort Prince of Wales in northern Germany and Sonny was there until 1970 until he moved CFE Lahr.

"We went to the Berlin wall — separating East and West Germany. On our side it was 1970, on their side it looked like 1938," he said.

He smiled with a chuckle as he recalled his overseas tour.

See **TWO** page 3

CWO (Ret'd) Sonny O'Donnell in his old Army uniform before CADPAT was introduced (above). His father Allen (below) taking a smoke break on a cold day during his service in both the Second World and Korean Wars.

Photos supplied



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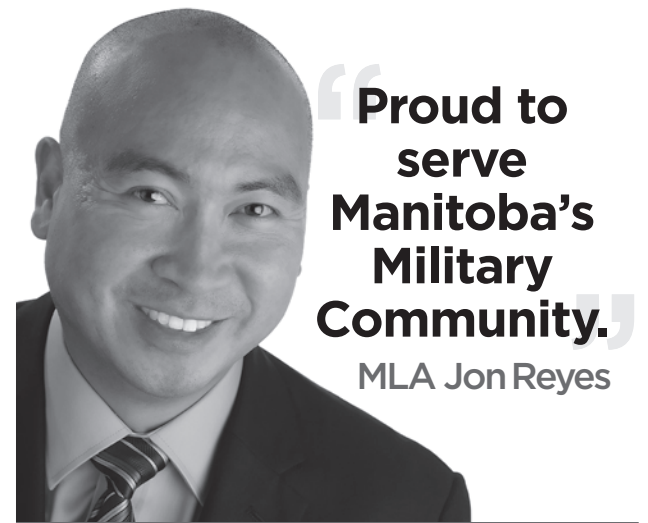
Lest We Forget

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Sonny O'Donnell's grandfather Vernon (above) posed for his Great War portrait with wife Sadie. He was awarded three medals (top right) for his service overseas. Sonny's father Allen was awarded seven medals for his service in the Second World War and the Korean War. Sonny himself received two medals, and a CD clasp, for his 33 years serving in the CAF.

Photos supplied



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Retired from the CAF, realtor David Castellanos wants to serve those who serve from CFB Shilo

Two sons serving with 1RCHA 'did me proud' says retired CWO

From page 2

“It was incredible. But it was good to be home. We really enjoyed it over there. There was a bicycle trail we used to take to work all the time. I pretty much grew up over there. I got there when I was 20, the last time the Leafs won the Stanley Cup.”

In total, Sonny was posted to Germany just shy of 13 years. It was there he met his wife Sandra, a dependent living on Base at the time.

“It was great. I kept putting in for extension after extension and I got ‘em.”

The most time he left the family for a military course was two months. Anything more than that, like a year: “We moved as a family. We stayed together. I didn’t like the part where you leave them for a year.”

There are days Sonny misses his time in the military.

“I miss the people the most,” he said. “They say it’s like a family.”

He’s kept in touch with the people he met back in Ger-

many, too. Spending 33 years in the military had it’s pluses. “The kids developed an appreciation,” he offered.

As the RSM for the Artillery School at CFB Gaagetown, it was difficult for Sonny’s children to enter university without a strong French background. That’s when the decision was made, as a family, to move back to CFB Shilo where both boys attended Brandon University.

“Once they finished, they joined the military, which surprised me,” he noted.

To say he is proud of his children following in their father’s, grandfather’s and great-grandfather’s footsteps is an understatement.

“The boys really did me proud. That’s good for them. Good for their families. They’ve never been in jail. They don’t do drugs. They don’t do alcohol. What more could I ask for? Really?”

For further information on locating a family member’s attestation papers, visit: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/second-world-war/Pages/introduction.aspx>

Home Station Regiment seeks auction donations

Stag Special

The Home Station Regimental Senate is issuing a national appeal to serving and retired Gunners, and friends and family of the Home Station Regiment, to donate items of collector interest.

The donated items would be auctioned in a charity event to fund Home Station initiatives which aim to nurture the family institution, connect with Canadians and celebrate our heritage.

The charity auction will coincide with the 150th anniversary of the formation of A and B Batteries, as part of UBIQUE 150, which will occur in the fall of 2021. If you make a donation you will receive a tax receipt for the appraised value of the item and any shipping costs incurred. Although not all inclusive the following is a list of suggested items which would be of value to the auction efforts: antique army/

unit insignia items, historical military or military related items, flags, military optics, plaques, field furniture, RCAF ash trays propellers, trench art, military prints/photos, medals, firearms (military and civilian), edged weapons (swords, knives, bayonets), significant uniforms, historical hat badges, souvenirs of interest from overseas deployments and combat operations (include letter of provenance if available), trophies, departure gifts, awards, vehicles, operational maps, unopened commemorative beverages, as well as UN memorabilia.

For information on how and what to donate, contact the Home Station Senate executive member Maj(Ret’d) Jim Fisher. He will be happy to answer questions, arrange appraisals and provide delivery details.

As the OPI for this endeavour, his contact information is 780-863-2045 or use e-mail shelldrakejim@gmail.com

Visit <http://rca-arc.org/links/canadian-gunner-associations>

Pte Cecil Minary trained at Camp Hughes

Jules Xavier
Shilo Stag

On the 103 anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge in April, Kendra Minary was thinking about her great-great-uncle Cecil Minary.

She spent the past spring researching her relative, who was Killed In Action (KIA) east of Arras, France on Aug. 28, 1918. She had the luxury of letters he wrote home to tell her about his experiences overseas.

Standing five-foot-eight, Pte Minary enlisted in Winnipeg on Nov. 30, 1915, leaving his bachelorhood on the farm to fight in the Great War.

Born on July 6, 1895 in Nesbitt, he joined the Little Black Devils 144th Battalion. Kendra learned he nearly never made it overseas.

"While in early training at Camp Hughes he very nearly died from pneumonia," she said, acknowledging in the days before antibiotics it took him more than seven months to recover.

He was sent to hospital in Winnipeg, from Camp Hughes, on Dec. 15, 1915. He returned to his unit on March 20, 1916. He then returned to hospital with heart problems, according to his attestation paperwork, this time he was hospitalized from May 9 to 16, and again from May 26 to Aug. 29.

Despite a delay in training in the trenches of Camp Hughes, Pte Minary was exposed to what he would expect to see when Canada led the charge on entrenched Germans on Vimy Ridge, France, in April 1917. The training area west of Carberry replicated what the battlefield in France resembled thanks to aerial photographs taken by the RAF.



PTE CECIL MINARY

Pte Minary left Halifax, NS, on Sept. 18, 1916 aboard a troop-laden SS Olympic, arriving in Liverpool, England, on Sept. 25. He began further training after being Taken On Strength (TOS) on Jan. 12, 1917 in Seaford.

"He had been picked in a draft of 30 men to join the 52nd Battalion," said Kendra. "The 52nd was still a reserve unit in April at the time of the Vimy Ridge battle, but Cecil's letters tell of seeing action shortly after.

"It would appear his unit was continually in and out of the battle lines until at least August 1918.

"In Cecil's letters he spoke of some close brushes with death and of friends being killed or wounded. But Cecil seemed to have had a charmed life because in the same action, he was only shot through the heel of his boot."

Pte Minary finally arrived in France on Feb. 2, 1917, TOS seven days later. He saw duty finally on April 12.

"There is little in his letters to suggest of the horrors and hardships we now know these men endured," offered Kendra. "In fact, he would appear to do his best to make light of it all."

Pte Minary's letters to his family back in Canada revealed that as of October 1917 he was in charge of his machine gun crew. The previous soldier in charge was wounded, and had to undergo a serious operation to

remove a piece of shrapnel that struck his temple and it was unknown when or if he would return to France.

What else did her great-great-uncle's letters tell of his war experience?

"Cecil stated he carried no rifle, just a revolver and the Lewis machine gun and he was the man who did all the shooting when the Germans were in sight."

With the 100-day push on with allied troops pushing the

Germans back from territory they held for much of the four-year war, tragedy struck the 52nd battalion in late summer 1918.

"Unfortunately, on Aug. 28, he and his crew of six other men were hit by an artillery shell near Bois Du Vert, France. Six of the seven men, including Cecil, were killed."

Earning \$20 per month during the war, Pte Minary was 23 when he was KIA.

He is buried in the Vis-En-Artois British Cemetery in Pas de Calais, France — Plot VII, Row 6, Grave 16.

The COVID-19 pandemic has afforded Kendra the time research her family history, including that of her great-great-uncle Cecil.

"Cecil's story is very fascinating," she said. "I would love to find ancestors of the man who survived the artillery shell hit that killed my great-great-uncle to see if they have any of his stories or letters."

Pte Minary's military skills did not go unnoticed on the battlefield in France. He was awarded a Good Conduct Badge in the field on Nov. 30, 1917.

His great-grandfather also served, but Kendra said she knows little about his time in the Army.

"My dad said he never talked about it. It was probably too hard after losing his brother," she said.

During the pandemic Kendra has spent time typing out the more than 60 letters she has from a war that ended 75 days after Pte Minary died.

While Pte Minary volunteered to go overseas, his five-foot-six, 133-pound younger brother William was drafted at age 21.

Born on Oct. 25, 1896, the young farmer, also a bachelor like big brother, had his medical in Brandon on Nov. 19, 1917, and signed his military paperwork on June 5, 1918.

With casualties mounting in France and Belgium, where the CEF concentrated its soldiers, William Minary was called to serve, not volunteer, under the Military Service Act 1917.

He was sent to Winnipeg on Aug. 7 and joined No. 10 Engineers and Railway Construction Corps. By Aug. 15 he was Struck Off Strength (SOS) and received \$16.50 in pay. He would see no military action, and was officially discharged on Jan. 9, 1919.



After training at Camp Hughes, and surviving near-death medical issues in Manitoba, Pte Cecil Minary went overseas and saw action shortly after the Battle of Vimy Ridge had started in April 1917. He was in charge of a machine gun crew (below). He was KIA on Aug. 28, 1918 and is buried in France.



Lest we Forget

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Self-isolate if you experience 'cold' symptoms

Shilo Stag

The province of Manitoba is firmly entrenched in the second wave of COVID-19.

While the majority of the cases are not in the local area — no cases among military members in CFB Shilo as of Oct. 25 — we do have many members traveling to and from areas that are experiencing an outbreak.

Additionally, the fall is when we typically see higher numbers of cases of the common cold and influenza. It is especially important that everyone continues to practice the basics in preventing transmission of communicable respiratory disease.

These include, but are not limited to, staying home when experiencing symptoms, appropriate hand hygiene, use of non-medical masks, social distancing, limiting group sizes, limiting close contacts and getting the annual flu shot.

In addition to this, it is critical to stay home if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. We have seen a number of cases where members do not self-isolate initially, stating they thought they just had a cold.

Many common colds are caused by the same family of viruses as COVID-19, and there is no way to differentiate a "common cold" from COVID-19 based on symptoms alone.

Even if it is not COVID-19 and is influenza or the com-

mon cold you are still contagious, thus the requirement to self-isolate until symptoms have resolved for 24 hours.

We all need to do our part in this fight, as one person choosing to ignore these precautions can have severe consequences.

This was demonstrated by a case in Winnipeg where an individual went out while symptomatic. During the course of the next 12 days, as a direct consequence from this individual, there were 40 people that tested positive and 243 people that were required to self-isolate for 14 days.

Symptoms may include: cough, headache, fever/chills, muscle aches, sore throat/hoarse voice, shortness of breath/breathing difficulties, loss of taste or smell, vomiting, or diarrhea for more than 24 hours, poor feeding if an infant, runny nose, fatigue, nausea or loss of appetite, conjunctivitis (pink eye) and skin rash of unknown cause.

If you experience ANY of the symptoms above, IMMEDIATELY self-isolate, and call the Base's health clinic at ext 4125 during business hours for further direction if military.

Civilians can call health links at 1-888-315-9257 or use the online self assessment tool <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

Meanwhile, if you are experiencing severe difficulty breathing, chest pain, confusion, extreme drowsiness or loss of consciousness, present directly to the nearest emergency department.

Maintaining healthy fighting force remains

Jody Thomas & Gen Jonathan Vance Stag Special

As the number of COVID-19 cases increase across the country, our mission to maintain a healthy fighting force remains.

Mitigation measures remain in place, and we must continue to do our part to reduce the risk of contracting and spreading the disease.

Posted online is the CDS/DM Directive for Sustained Activities in a COVID-19 Environment, which has already been shared through the Chain of Command.

This consolidated directive helps all L1s review their business continuity plans to address the constraints of a COVID-19 environment in its current context.

It will also assist them in initiating these plans swiftly, and as required.

We ask that all CAF/DND members be aware of and follow regional orders as they pertain to where you work and live.

Of note, Quebec has recently placed restrictions on specific regions while, the Ontario government Oct. 9 introduced new measures with a focus on Peel Region, Toronto, and Ottawa.

Together, DND/CAF can be ready to respond when the nation calls upon us. But to do that, we must stay focused because COVID-19 remains a persistent and long-term threat.

Continue to follow the direction of local authorities and your Chain of Command and apply all the self-protection health protocols currently in place.

Thanks for your continued dedication to fight the virus and for your leadership in enforcing public health measures at work, at home, and in our communities.

Jody Thomas/Deputy Minister & Gen Jonathan Vance/CDS

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Col (Ret'd) Christopher Simonds 1958-2020

Former BComd served starting in August 2001

Shilo Stag

A former Base Commander who held the post for two years starting in the summer of 2001 has died in an Ottawa hospital following a complex medical journey which began in July.

Col (Ret'd) Christopher Simonds was 62.

Born in Kingston, Ont. on Sept. 26, 1958, Col (Ret'd) Simonds died Oct. 13 with wife Maj (Ret'd) Krista Simonds at his side. His four sons were able to visit him prior to his death.

His schooling took him across Canada because of his father Col (Ret'd) Charles Simonds' postings: Winnipeg, Ottawa, Kingston and Port Hope.

He went on to earn a chemical (nuclear) engineering degree from Royal Military College (RMC) in Kingston in 1980. He served with unwavering commitment for 37 years in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA).

Col (Ret'd) Simonds' life was one of dedicated service to the military, his family, and to friends and colleagues. While his work often took him away from those he loved, when he could, he enjoyed golfing and curling, watching the Blue Jays, and travelling the world with his family.

During the course of his life, he received many honours and awards for his contributions to both the military and civilian communities he served.

He replaced LCol Rick Wilson, who served from October 1997 to August 2001, as BComd on Aug. 10.



Col (Ret'd) Christopher Simonds (right) served as BComd for two years on this Base starting in August 2001. His BComd portrait (left) hangs on the wall at Base HQ in the Command Suite area.

An afternoon funeral was held Oct. 29, with burial at the Catarauqui Cemetery in Kingston.

Second World War medic receives RCMSA lifetime membership

Maj Joel Bernier Stag Special

This month has been significant for 104-year-old Cpl (Ret'd) John Pauls.

He was honoured with a lifetime membership to the Royal Canadian Medical Services Association (RCMSA), which is an independent, non-profit, all ranks organization dedicated to promoting Canada's military Medical services — past, present and future, and contributing to the advancement of healthcare in Canada.

This is accomplished by increasing public awareness, preserving heritage and fostering Esprit de Corp.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls served as a medic with the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC) in Italy and Europe during the Second World War.

He was mainly employed in second line medical support, which today would be known as a Role 2 Basic within the Brigade support area.

He was awarded the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, France Star, Germany Star, Defence Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp, as well as being mentioned in dispatches.

He was promoted to corporal while in Italy.

Recalling his military service as a medic during the Second World War, Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls said: "The medical tents



Cpl (Ret'd) John Pauls sits in his wheelchair at Bethania Mennonite Personal Care Home, where he shows off the Quilt of Valour he recently received.

Photo Marlene Pauls Laucht

in which we worked were moved frequently as the battle lines changed. Several times while working in these tents, we were even closer to the battle, as the artillery shots were directly overhead.

"At one time, a barrage lasted for at least two days non-stop. Shrapnel, loud, low flying planes and mortar fire were exploding close by on numerous occasions."

His recent achievement came with a certificate and coin to accompany the honour, and both were presented Oct. 2 to his daughter Marlene Pauls Laucht near Winnipeg's Saint-Boniface Cathedral War Memorial, by 11 CF H Svs Centre's

Shilo Command Team.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls could not attend the presentation in-person due to COVID-19 protocols currently in place to protect residents of a long-term care facility, where he resides.

The Command Team also took the opportunity to present his daughter with a Quilt of Valour from the Quilt of Valour Canada Society, to give to her father.

The Quilt of Valour is Canadian handmade and is presented to soldiers — past and present — in gratitude for their service. This particular quilt was provided by CFB Shilo's Transition Centre, with an inscription stating: "Handmade with love, respect and gratitude for your sacrifice to Canada. May the hugs stitched into this quilt give you comfort, strength and love."

The presentation respected social distancing, but still gave the Command Team an opportunity to share fond memories with Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls' daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter, while also honouring his service to Canada.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls was discharged from the RCAMC after the war, following demobilization. However, his medical service to his comrades did not end there.

He became a medical orderly and eventually a supervisor at Deer Lodge Veterans' Hospital in Winnipeg, where he worked for 30 years, taking care of his fellow brothers and sisters in arms.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls has now received his certificate, coin and quilt, which are proudly on display in his room.

Daughter Pauls Laucht said, "My dad is already using the beautiful quilt and enjoying the extra layer of warmth. He was pleased when I described the presentation, showed him the pictures we took and showed him the certificates and medallion. The certificate sits on his picture board in his room and the quilt covers and decorates the bed."

References: www.quiltsofvalour.ca/ & www.royalcdn-medicalsvc.ca/

Maj Joel Bernier/CO 11 CF H Svs C Shilo

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- Proficiency in MS Office (Word, Excel, Power Point, Outlook).
- Demonstrated ability to work as an effective team member with minimal supervision.
- Demonstrated willingness to take initiative and desire to learn and seek new ideas.
- Demonstrated ability to complete all tasks with keen attention to detail.
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CFMWS wants youth reporters

Stag Special

Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) newspapers are looking for youth reporters from military families between the ages of 13 and 18 who want to write a story about an issue which is important to their life or the community around them.

The story must be original and about an issue or a personal experience or insight which has not been widely reported, and reflects the life of the contributor or their friends and family.

Young people interested in this endeavour should submit an application with their story pitch between Oct. 6 and Dec. 31.

The application can be found at www.CAFconnection.ca/YouthReporter

Then, CAF newspaper editors or managers will meet in January to choose the five most unique and powerful story pitches — and have the winning entrants write their story.

The stories will be published online and in CAF newspapers like your *Shilo Stag*. Up for grabs is a grand prize package and scholarship for the best story, determined by readership votes.



Maj Howie Nelson has his grandfather's medals hanging on the wall of his COS office at Base HQ
 Photo Kimberley Kielley/Shilo Stag

Flight Lieutenant Joseph Potosky's medals displayed at work COS proud of grandfather's role in flight bombing German U-boats

Kimberley Kielley
 Shilo Stag

Maj Howie Nelson's Chief of Staff (COS) office sits across from the Base Commander's in an area where access to this elite group of soldiers lay behind ornate, leather-covered doors.

Inside Maj Nelson's work space, the walls show an impressive collection of military memorabilia.

One particular treasured item sits mounted, and framed behind glass. It's his grandfather's Second World War medals.

Maj Nelson explained his Czech grandfather Flight Lieutenant Joseph Potosky was the son of immigrants.

Potosky was a navigator and wireless operator with the RCAF during the Second World War, patrolling above the Mediterranean, bombing German U-boats when detected.

Maj Nelson's grandmother Winnifred Potosky also served in the Royal Signal Corps with the RAF, manipulating figurines of Allied soldiers across a war map with a long stick which had a flat end on it. She served in the same theatre as her husband and that's how they met, somewhere in North Africa, said Maj Nelson.

"He was with the Coastal Command stationed out of Algiers, Algeria. He would have been part of the anti-submarine bombers in the Mediterranean. He likely was with No. 6 Group. He flew in a Lockheed Hudson," he continued.

The Hudson started out as the Lockheed Model 14 Electra. It was created to compete against the new Douglas DC-X aircraft. The prototype first flew in July 1937.

American built, the Hudson was a light bomber and coastal reconnaissance aircraft which was specifically built for the RAF just prior to the Second World War.

It was a military conversion of the Lockheed Model 14 Super Electra. The RAF ordered 200 Hudsons for their part as watchers of the sky during the war, but they also served in transport, training and delivering agents into occupied France. As anti-submarine squadrons with the RCAF, they were used extensively for this purpose.

As the United States had yet joined the war, the early se-

ries of aircraft were flown to the Canada-USA border where they landed and were towed across the Canadian border by tractors and horse-drawn teams, where the planes were flown to RCAF airfields. Once there, they were dismantled and wrapped as cargo and shipped to Liverpool. The Boulton Paul dorsal turret wasn't supplied, but installed once the planes were delivered to England.

Despite being outclassed by larger bombers, the Hudson accomplished some impressive feats at the beginning of the war. Tight turns were a notable feature as a twin engine aircraft whose pilot briefly feathered the engine.

With his grandparents finding love in the middle of a war, they married at the Officer's Mess in Heliopolis and honeymooned in Cairo, Egypt.

"My grandmother was a war bride I guess," noted Maj Nelson. "I think it was periods of boredom followed by extreme excitement," he continued as he referenced his grandfather's navigator and wireless operator military career in the Mediterranean.

He recalled how his grandfather told him of coming through CFB Shilo with the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan prior to flying to the United Kingdom to join the war effort.

"CFB Shilo, at the time, was a bombing run. My grandfather remembered coming here, doing his training, and dropping bombs in the training area in the early 40s. This is where they did their training and flight school."

Joseph Potosky was awarded five medals for his efforts during the war.

Maj Nelson has been COS since 2018 following a colourful military career that spans 22 years.

"People ask me what it's like going away on tour. It's the only time you get to do your job. Imagine you're a teacher and every day you practise teaching. And then one day you're told you're going to have students," he said. "That's exactly what you're doing," he said.

Maj Nelson's grandfather was alive when he joined the military.

"He certainly was proud of me. It's more of a coincidence following in my grandfather's footsteps. But it's something I always admired in him."



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When he donated his Second World War memorabilia to 11 CF H Svcs C in 2019, John Pauls had an opportunity to wear his beret and show the difference in today's headwear worn by clinic WO Lisa Forester. The donated items are currently at the RCA Museum, where staff are working on a display to be showcased at the clinic.

Photos supplied



During the Second World War John Pauls (above) befriended a number of wounded German soldiers he treated.

Mennonite John Pauls volunteered to help soldiers, not shoot them

Medic befriends German POWs

Kimberley Kielley

Shilo Stag

On the surface, Cpl (Ret.'d) John Pauls is just one of a handful of remaining Second World War veterans.

Just shy of 105, Pauls spends his days dozing in warm sunlight at Bethania Mennonite Personal Care Home in Winnipeg, living out his days.

That's right — he lives at a Mennonite Personal Care home.

And if you know anything about Mennonite involvement during war times, you would know they were conscientious objectors and pacifists.

So how does a pacifist and conscientious objector end up in a war?

Pauls arrived in Canada as a child shortly after the Russian Revolution as a refugee.

Born in Eichenfeld, Chortiza Ukraine, then Russia, on April 27, 1916, Pauls' father and fellow villagers were murdered during the Russian Revolution, leaving him, his brother, mother and aunt to fend for themselves.

Pauls' daughter, Marlene Pauls Laucht, said her grandmother was forced to beg for bread to feed her children at one point.

They were Russian Mennonites.

By 1924 approximately, Canada had already a large influx of Russian Mennonites who had settled on the prairies.

Between 1923 and 1929, in another wave, roughly 22,000 Russian Mennonites emigrated to Canada as a result of the Russian Revolution and Civil War according to the website: <http://thirdwaycafe.com/glossary/history-and-immigration-of-mennonites-into-canada/>

The Canadian Mennonites of Manitoba sponsored Pauls and his family.

He was eight when they landed in Manitoba, where the Mennonite community was already established on the prairies.

Pauls' mother worked as a housekeeper, keeping her youngest son close to her while Cornelius, Pauls' older brother, worked hard labor on a farm according to Pauls' daughter.

When the Great Depression swept across North America, Pauls rode the rails in search of work as a young man.

Times were tough. Then the call came. Another World War had erupted overseas. Canada needed soldiers.

As a Mennonite conscientious objector and pacifist, Pauls initially rejected the call to join the war effort. An unsympa-

thetic judge denied the request.

Laucht, said her father recalling that moment, telling her, "If I have to go, I'll go as a volunteer. He didn't want to shoot people so he asked if he could become a medic where he could help instead," she said.

With no guarantee his request would be granted, much to his relief, it was. He joined the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC) from March 3, 1942, serving until June 5, 1946.

During basic training in Portage la Prairie, an old farm injury to his trigger finger prevented him from completing his rifle training.

"That's okay," he told his instructor, "I don't want to shoot anyone anyway."

Camp Borden, Ont., saw him take his advanced medical training and then off to Halifax, NS, where he waited for his transportation to Europe and ultimately his destiny as a war medic.

Mary Friesen, his girlfriend at the time who would later become his wife, travelled from Manitoba to see Pauls off.

His military career took him to theatres of service in United Kingdom, Central Mediterranean (Italy and Sicily including Ortona, Cassino and Anzio) France, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany.

England had so many bombs exploding around him, it was here he received extensive medical and mock battle training in preparation for Sicily.

En route to Sicily, his ship was attacked and came under enemy aerial fire.

He witnessed some of the worst war atrocities in Italy. Laucht said her father rarely spoke of those times.

But he remembered plump oranges hanging from trees upon his arrival to Sicily and children begging — two sights unfamiliar to the Canadian farm boy.

Medical tents were moved frequently as battle lines continuously changed.

Possibly his worst memory of the war was in Anzio, Italy, about 51 kilometres south of Rome, where he recalled how the Red Cross was caught between fighting lines of fire during a fast retreat.

Despite exposure to enemy fire, Pauls was never wounded. He was among 41 Manitobans mentioned in Despatches for his bravery for dragging an injured soldier to safety while under enemy fire.

Yet, during the entire time, Pauls remembered his Mennonite upbringing and made friends easily, even with the enemy.

"He was a people watcher," Laucht recalled.

A young German pilot who only spoke his native tongue lay in a bed at one of the hospitals Pauls worked in during the war. Too injured to be moved, the young man was terrified to be surrounded by Allied hospital personnel.

As a Mennonite being fluent in Russian and German, Pauls sought the young man out in his downtime and conversed in German. After the war, Pauls and the young pilot continued their contact and friendship.

Another young German patient had gone deaf. Frightened, he relayed his concerns to Pauls who immediately looked in the young man's ears. Discovering a plug of wax, Pauls took to relieving the young man of his discomfort and poured warmed oil into his ear canal, making the young man's hearing return.

A German woman in Oldenburg, who fed Pauls Sunday dinner regularly with whatever food she had, became friends with the young medic. Pauls brought extra food he was sent by his girlfriend and shared it with the woman and her two young children.

Years later, Pauls and his wife regularly shipped food and clothing to the woman as her husband had been killed during the war and continued to need the extra help, according to Laucht.

She added her father held "No grudges against the enemy. His role was to ease the pain and difficulties of the injured if he could. He is a very kind and gentle man. He lived the values he had been raised with. He always served."

A bit of a historian and collector, Pauls brought his war treasures back to Canada after the war ended. In his collection is a treasured silk hankie with a map on either side that was given to Pauls from an appreciative Allied patient he cared for him during the war.

On the hankie, the inscription reads: "To my orderly at 4 CCS Italy. L/Cpl Short A.F. No. 1C9BHQ, 26/1/44. This map was in the invasion of Sicily. I got it wet in my pocket while wading ashore in the Mediterranean."

A set of cloth cords that kept his cuffed pant legs anchored are another item he kept. Buried in the loop of cloth were live bullets, Laucht noted.

Pauls married Mary on July 5, 1947, a year after he was discharged. Laucht said her mother told her she wanted to give Pauls a year to re-adjust to civilian life because she heard it could be a challenge for those returning from the war.

Even so, at one point, after they married, Mary recalled waking up in the night and finding Pauls curled up on the floor with a thin blanket covering him.

See **AFTER** page 15

Great-uncle awarded MM, with bar

From the front

Unfortunately, following a serious GSW (Gun Shot Wound) to his left arm and head on Oct. 16, he died five weeks later at 6:30 a.m. at 14 General Hospital — four days before the First World War ended on Nov. 11, 1918. He was awarded a bar for his MM on Aug. 29, 1919.

And soon, visitors to the RCA Museum will be able to see a special display featuring Sgt MacKenzie's First World War memorabilia, including two of his medals, bronze memorial plaque, commonly known as the Dead Man's Penny, and a working gold pocket watch.

These items are now part of the museum's vast artillery collection because of a donation from longtime Coach's Corner contributor 86-year-old Don Cherry. From his home in Ontario, the former NHL coach — Boston and Colorado — reached out to the RCA Museum's Regimental Major, Maj Trevor Michelsen, about donating his great-uncle's war memorabilia.

"Sgt MacKenzie is one of 60,000 Canadians who died in the war and deserves to be honoured ... should be honoured," said museum director Andrew Oakden. "Thomas was a typical Canadian who stepped up and volunteered to go overseas. He had repeated acts of bravery where he was awarded his Military Medal, with bar."

Oakden's staff is currently working on a special display case with the donated artifacts, and will showcase it in the museum's First World War section.

"My reason for donating Sgt Thomas [MacKenzie's] memorabilia to your museum is I looked at the medals etc and thought to myself who would honour and feel the same as I do about these articles," Cherry wrote Oakden. "I thought of your museum and the RCA [at] CFB Shilo. I know that Sgt Thomas [MacKenzie] would feel honoured these articles are with your museum."

The memorabilia arrived in Manitoba in mid-October, with museum staff initially kept busy cataloguing and preparing the items, including Coach's Corner memorabilia

provided by Cherry to accompany his great-uncle's artifacts.

Among those items is a CDS coin he received, plus an autographed image showing Cherry in one of his many colourful suits he wore on the CBC show that ran for 37 years.

In a letter included in the parcel, Cherry wrote: "Thank-you [Andrew] so much for allowing Sgt Thomas MacKenzie into your great museum. I am very proud of Sgt Thomas and I know he is honoured to be in your museum."

Cherry pointed out in the letter that his great-uncle worked as a plumber in Kingston at Royal Military College (RMC).

"It was a tragedy that [Thomas] was killed on Nov. 7, 1918 four days before the end of the war," he wrote.

Among the cherished items provided by Cherry is an eight-by-10 photograph of Sgt MacKenzie sitting among a group of fellow CEF soldiers. On his lap is a white Jack Russell Terrier.

"This is a great collection," said Oakden as he perused the memorabilia laid out in one the museum's special document processing rooms.

"I think visitors to the museum will enjoy this special collection once we have it finished."

Who was blue-eyed Sgt Thomas MacKenzie, a man standing five-foot-10 when he signed his attestation papers after enlisting in Kingston on Jan. 24, 1916?

Prior to the war, he did serve with the 48th Highlanders for two years. A bachelor before going overseas, Sgt MacKenzie was with C Bty RCHA when he began his artillery training in Canada. He was initially posted to 82 Howitzer Bty RCFA in October 1916, and later as part of reinforcements transferred to 1st Battalion CFA (Canadian Field Artillery).

He left for Halifax after initial training in Canada aboard SS Olympic on April 11, 1916. After the trip across the Atlantic Ocean, he landed in Liverpool, England and was Taken on Strength (TOS) at Shorncliffe. By the fall he was promoted from Gunner to corporal, and this was confirmed on March 14, 1917 while training in Witley.

On March 18, 1917 after months of artillery training on English soil, he finally left for the front in France. His soldiering on the battlefield earned him his sergeant's stripes on March 30, 1918.

In early August 1918, Sgt MacKenzie's bravery on the battlefield earned him his MM. A few weeks later he suffered his second war wound on Sept. 26, this time a GSW while fighting the Germans in France near Boulogne.

Considered "serious wounds" by military medical staff, he was admitted to 14 General Hospital on Oct. 12. On his casualty form medical staff wrote "condition is very poor" and "dangerously ill."

An error by medical staff listed Sgt MacKenzie as dying on Oct. 10. This error was corrected a few days later on the medical records, as the sergeant continued to fight for his life.

But his fight ended at dawn four days before the Armistice was signed in the Forest of Compiègne by the Allies and Germans, ending the Great War, after four years of conflict.

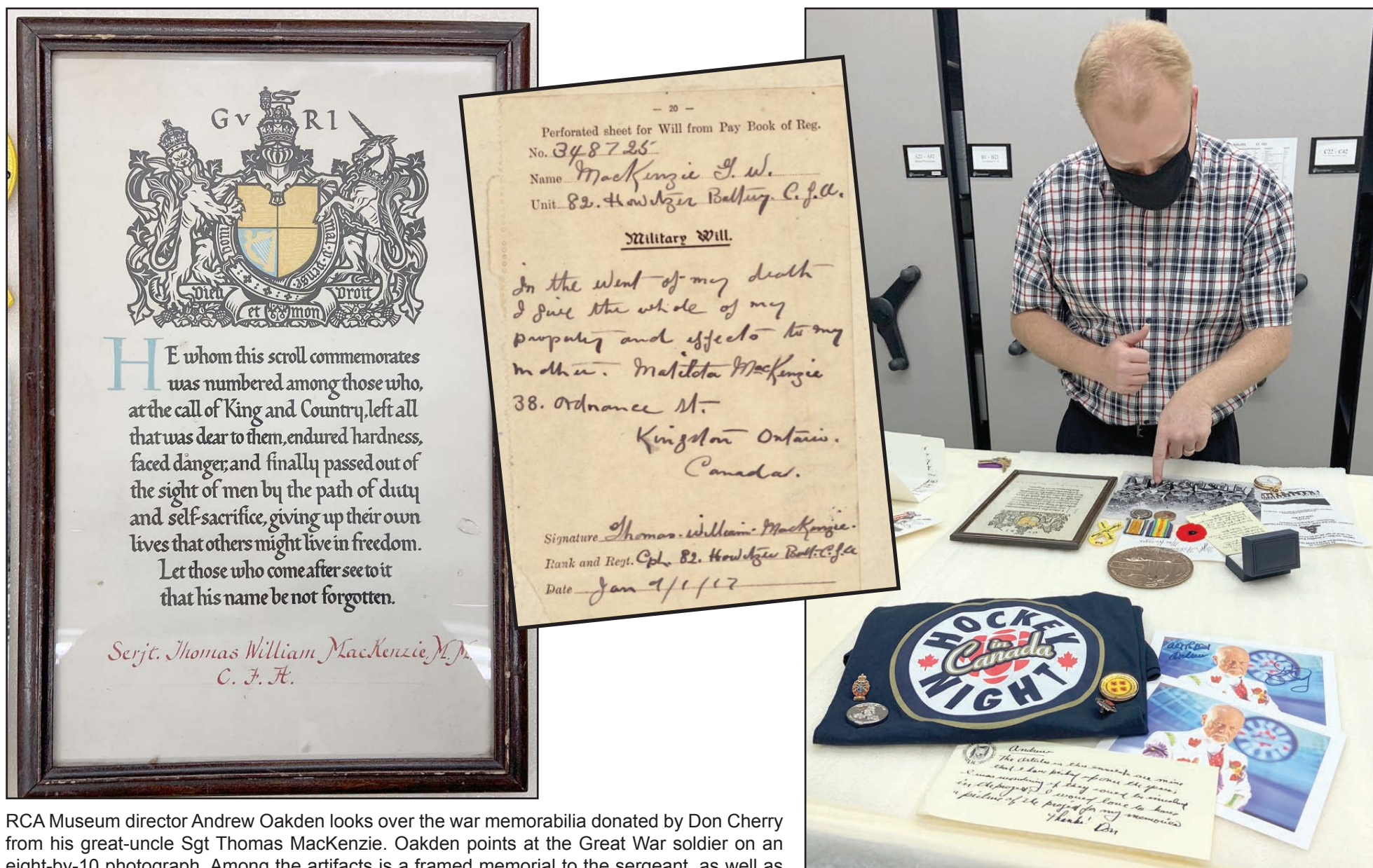
In his will written on Jan. 1, 1917 from the CEF's Pay Book, Sgt MacKenzie wrote: "In the event of my death I give the whole of my property and effects to my mother [Matilda in Kingston, Ont.]."

During the war overseas, Sgt MacKenzie thought about his mom and assigned \$15 of his monthly pay to be sent back to her in Ontario. From April 1916 to Dec. 1, 1918, that meant Matilda MacKenzie received \$480.

While the Kingston plumber did not return home, his heroics on the battlefield is not lost on Oakden.

"I think Don will be happy once we finish off the display for his great-uncle. He's provided us with some great artifacts. He's asked for a photograph of it once we are done for his memories."

Following his Nov. 7 death from wounds, Sgt MacKenzie was buried in area IX, row D, grave nine in the Terlinthun British Cemetery in Wimille, which is on the northern outskirts of Boulogne. Lest we forget!



RCA Museum director Andrew Oakden looks over the war memorabilia donated by Don Cherry from his great-uncle Sgt Thomas MacKenzie. Oakden points at the Great War soldier on an eight-by-10 photograph. Among the artifacts is a framed memorial to the sergeant, as well as his military will (inset) he wrote on Jan. 7, 1917.

Photos Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag

LEST WE FORGET



Pte Garrett Chidley, 21, Cambridge, Ont., 2PPCLI, KIA on Dec. 30, 2009

These 20 soldiers from CFB Shilo paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country while deployed to Afghanistan. They shall not be forgotten.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago*

*We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*
— **John McCrae**



Sgt Prescott Shipway, 36, Saskatoon, SK, 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 7, 2008

During the COVID-19 pandemic CFB Shilo will hold a virtual Remembrance Day service from the MPTF in a pre-taped ceremony running on the *Stag's* Facebook page starting after 10:30 a.m.



Pte Chadwick Horn, 21, Calgary, AB, 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 3, 2008



Cpl Andrew Grenon, 23, Windsor, Ont., 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 3, 2008



Cpl Michael Seggie, 21, Winnipeg, 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 3, 2008



MCpl Joshua Roberts, 29, Prince Albert, SK, 2PPCLI, KIA on Aug. 9, 2008



Cpl Jim Arnal, 25, Winnipeg, 2PPCLI, KIA on July 18, 2008



Capt Richard Leary, 32, Brantford, Ont., 2PPCLI, KIA on June 3, 2008



Pte Terry Street, 24, Surrey, BC, 2PPCLI, KIA on April 4, 2008



Sgt Jason Boyes, 32, Napanee, Ont., 2PPCLI, KIA on March 16, 2008



Bdr Jeremie Ouellet, 22, Matane, Que., 1RCHA, KIA on March 11, 2008



Capt Jefferson Francis, 37, New Brunswick, 1RCHA, KIA on July 4, 2007



Pte David Byers, 22, Espanola, Ont., 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 18, 2006



Cpl Shane Keating, 30, Dalmaney, SK, 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 18, 2006



Cpl Keith Morley CD, 30, Winnipeg, 2PPCLI, KIA on Sept. 18, 2006



Cpl David Braun, 27, Raymore, SK, 2PPCLI, KIA on Aug. 22, 2006



MCpl Jeffrey Walsh, 33, Regina, SK, 2PPCLI, KIA on Aug. 9, 2006



Capt Nichola Goddard MSM, 26, Calgary, AB, 1RCHA, KIA on May 17, 2006



MCpl Timothy Wilson, 30, Grande Prairie, AB, 2PPCLI, KIA on March 5, 2006



Cpl Paul Davis, 28, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, 2PPCLI, KIA on March 2, 2006



DND making sure military spouses, partners have more job opportunities

Stag Special

The Department of National Defence (DND) is making it easier for military spouses and common-law partners to find secure and meaningful jobs.

Today, the Military Spouse Employment Initiative will open up opportunities for them across the entire federal public service.

The average military family relocates three times more often than the average Canadian family. This means uprooting their lives, changing their routines, and encountering new challenges on a regular basis.

As a result, it can be very challenging for partners of serving members to secure continuous and meaningful employment.

To help address this challenge, in 2018, DND created the Military Spousal Employment Initiative to identify job opportunities within its own organization.

“Our Defence Policy, Strong, Secure, Engaged, puts the care of members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families at its core.

Today, on Military Family Appreciation Day, we continue to build on our efforts to support the families who serve alongside those in uniform, and the Military Spousal Employment Initiative is an important step to the commitment,” said Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan.

“Military spouses and common-law partners will have more exposure helping them increase the likelihood of gaining meaningful employment, wherever they are posted in the country.”

Today’s announcement expands upon the initiative offering the entire Public Service access to a talented workforce.

The initiative has already proven to ease some of the stress felt by many military families, including Justine Walker’s.

“I’m very grateful for my job, and I definitely wouldn’t have it if it wasn’t for the Military Spouse Employment Initiative,” said Walker, who works as a compensation assistant at National Defence.

A military spouse, she says her full-time position gives her security, both now and in the future.

“When we get posted again, I’ll have options for transferring my job, finding a new job, or putting my job on hold while on a temporary posting. My employer is across Canada, and there are many opportunities to grow within the Department of National Defence community.”

She added, “I feel extremely secure in my career, and I’m proud to be contributing to my own pension and making a career for myself.”

Opening up the employment inventory to the entire federal public service will ensure there are more stories like Walker’s.

Further, at DND, military partners can now be considered as a hiring option ahead of other candidates — with the exception of those with priority entitlements or preference — if they meet all of the essential qualifications for the job.

“Military partners — mostly women — face a high degree of career instability as a result of the frequent relocations. This initiative creates better options for military spouses to find good jobs and benefits within the federal public service, and is exactly the kind of tangible support that helps improve the overall well-being of the military families who contribute so much to our country,” explained Deputy Minister of National Defence Jody Thomas.

“Employing a Canadian military spouse is a wise strategic decision for any employer. Military life teaches our Canadian Armed Forces [CAF] families to organize, adapt, manage, and work within a team, and any military spouse will arrive at their new job with those essential skills well-developed. By hiring a

military spouse, employers are strengthening Canada and Canadian business lines.”

Quick facts

- The inventory is open exclusively to spouses and common-law partners of serving CAF members, who either live at the military member’s place of duty or live separately for military reasons.

The CAF member must belong to the Regular Force or to the Reserve Force on Class C service or Class B reserve service of more than 180 consecutive days. Those who meet the above criteria are eligible to apply online to the inventory.

- The pool of talent includes many streams such as information management and information technology (IM/IT), procurement, materiel management, language teaching, health services, administration, and general services, as well as general trades and labour.

- The initiative supports several objectives outlined in Canada’s defence policy, Strong, Secured, Engaged.

Those objectives seek to support military families by addressing and alleviating the employment challenges that they face when relocating across Canada.

- The Military Spouse Employment Initiative has won the Most Effective Recruitment Strategy silver award at the Canadian HR Awards 2020.

- The Military Spousal Employment Initiative is a complement to a wide range of services available to military spouses through CFMWS and MFRC. These services include the flagship Military Spousal Employment Network, launched in 2018.

The Military Spousal Employment Network boasts more than 3,200 military spouse participants and showcases national and virtual employers interested in hiring military spouses through an online platform and virtual and in-person.

Last year, more than 25 per cent of military spouses who participated were hired through the Military Spousal Employment Initiative.



EARNING THEIR JUMPING WINGS

Here is a *Stag* scoop, with two 1RCHA soldiers graduating from their recent Basic Para 2001 course held at Garrison Edmonton. Bdr Tyler McCrory and Gnr Chasen Coulson did five jumps as a part of J-Stage, two without equipment, and two with equipment — rucksack and shoulder load. They also did a solo night jump. All jumps were static line round jumps done from an altitude of 1,250 feet. The artillery soldiers jumped from a CC-130J Hercules. Funny story, according to the photographer. First jump soldiers were exposed to a little light rain, but nothing crazy. Low light for imagery. Afternoon jump had high winds which pushed soldiers, including the photographer, around like a tumbleweed while we did “racetrack” waiting for the winds to die down. Long story short, the photographer captured some great shots, but it cost him 45-minutes holding an issued barf bag.

Lt Ryan Bartlette photos/1CMBG PAO



Robert, Joseph O'Donnell promoted to lieutenant-colonel same summer

Brothers follow in ancestor's artillery footsteps

Jules Xavier
Shilo Stag

Born in Lahr, Germany when his father CWO (Ret'd) Sonny O'Donnell was posted overseas with the RCA, son LCol Joe O'Donnell is doing his own foreign postings.

But it's no longer the battlefields of Afghanistan, where the 39-year-old saw two tours during the war.

Currently, coming up on his 16th year with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) this January, he's back in Kansas, posted to historic Fort Leavenworth.

"I am an instructor in the Department of Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Operations (DJIMO) faculty, at the US Army Command and General Staff College," offered LCol O'Donnell, who was BC of 1RCHA's A Bty when he was a major prior to his first posting to Kansas.

"So far it's an incredibly rewarding experience and a challenging job as I had to quickly study up on US Doctrine again at the Strategic and Operational level in order to teach it to US Army officers."

Once a Stag paperboy and Pizza Hut delivery boy growing up on this Base, LCol O'Donnell's list of postings also include the Royal Canadian Artillery School at CFB Gagetown three times; 1RCHA twice, where he left for his two tours to Afghanistan; and more recently a posting to Halifax, NS, as the Chief of Staff (COS) of 36th Canadian Brigade Group.

With his father retired and now calling Cottonwoods home, LCol O'Donnell admits he misses being back on the Manitoba prairies thanks to his previous experiences.

"I love Shilo and have spent the majority of my life there and really enjoyed growing up there through the '80s and '90s," he recalled. "I've lived in Shilo five separate times since 1984. I actually lived on the same street ... Alfriston for four of those times."



LCol JOE O'DONNELL

"I went to O'Kelly School from K to [Grade] 8. I've worked at about every job someone can work growing up in Shilo and met my wife there in the CANEX back in 1997, where the Pizza Hut used to be. I have nothing but fond memories and come back often since my parents retired there."

Why did he join the CAF, with artillery as his chosen trade? Was this to continue the tradition of his dad, grandfather Allen and great-grandfather Vernon?

"I enlisted in January 2005 and, yes, I selected

artillery due to it being a family tradition. My brother Rob had already joined and completed training and was posted back to 1RCHA.

"When I signed up, I wanted a different challenge. I had just finished my undergraduate degree from Brandon University and had enough of school for the time, so the Army was the perfect fit."

Both O'Donnell brothers were promoted the same summer from major to lieutenant-colonel, with brother Rob currently at CFB Kingston with CADTC as Army CT Chief.

What has LCol O'Donnell learned about himself as an artillery officer in the past 15 years?

"That's a tough question to answer concisely. I've learned a lot over the past 15 years, from the challenging training, two tours to Afghanistan, eight postings, starting a family, furthering my education," he said, "but I think that more than anything I've learned about



During his inaugural deployment during the Afghan War, now LCol Joe O'Donnell was a member of a FOO party. He would see two tours, and now teaches at historic Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

Photos supplied

human potential and the human spirit from some of the great people I've served with over the years."

Being posted to the United States might be another learning experience for the amiable artillery officer who introduced A Bty soldiers to Dr. Popsicle and a dip the lake for winter training, or the Manhunter showing his soldiers how to evade capture, or find someone in a dense forest based on signs left by them. 1RCHA will always be home.

"I miss a lot about 1RCHA. My time as FOO, RCPO, BC, 2IC were all incredible experiences," he recalls. "To answer the question and it sounds cliché, I miss the people I worked with. There are some excellent soldiers in One Horse, and it's a special Regiment for sure."

More of a basketball player, lacing up the skates for the historic annual Kingston Cup at Gunner Arena was something LCol O'Donnell needed to do despite not having any hockey or skating experience. He went toe-to-toe at the faceoff dot with then B Bty BC Maj Ryan Sheppard, currently deployed on Op JADE following his own stint at Fort Leavenworth after leaving 1RCHA.

Promoted from a young lieutenant during the course of his CAF career, to now achieving lieutenant-colonel pips and crowns, LCol O'Donnell does not compare experiences from each rank.

Instead, he said, "I've just shown up and done my job, at whichever rank it was at."

Nor does he think about brother Rob and himself as fourth generation artillery soldiers. He will reflect on it, especially around Remembrance Day, and is proud of continuing in the footsteps of his ancestors.

But there are commonalities when it comes to serving on the battlefield with his grandfather, and great-grandfather. A sense of Canadian pride serving one's country.

"I've not compared my experiences in Afghanistan to that of my grandfather or great-grandfather, but I can certainly say I'm proud to have served my country and to have served the Guns on operations," he explained.

"Being overseas as a Forward Observation Officer [FOO] on my first tour certainly presented challenges, but I was lucky enough to deploy with an outstanding FOO party who taught me a lot.

"Most of the team had experience in Afghanistan from previous rotations so we worked well together right from training to redeployment and I still chat with them on occasion and share stories and laughs."

He also served with Capt Nichola Goddard, when she was KIA in Afghanistan on May 17, 2006 — the first Canadian woman to die in a combat role.

"I was serving at the same time as Nichola. I met her once as a 2Lt when my brother Rob was showing me around the Regiment. My brother knew her better than I and was a part of TF 1-06 with A Bty when she was killed."

Unlike hearing war stories from our older generation, is LCol O'Donnell sharing his stories with his two sons?

"I don't share too much with my boys because they don't really care too much yet. I stumbled upon a video while on quarantine of the FOO party shooting the 25mm from the LAV overseas and they thought that was cool," he said. "I exaggerated the story in true 'dad fashion' of course."

What about war stories from your artillery ancestors? "I have learned very little about my grandfather and great-grandfather's experiences. I suspect they were men of few words," he said.

When LCol O'Donnell was a FOO with 1RCHA, his older brother was the adjutant. He looked up to his sibling as a role model and appreciated his guidance as a young officer.

What advice will he offer his own sons about serving their country, and perhaps choosing to follow in their ancestors' footsteps and work alongside the M777?

"My dad gave me some solid advice: not to use pen in the field because it freezes," he said. "I'd probably pass the same to my sons and let them figure out the rest for themselves. That's the best way to do it."



Former 1RCHA adjutant LCol Robert O'Donnell is posted to CFB Kingston, Ont.

Col Josiah Holmes 1845-1928

Military pioneer in Canada commanded C Bty on Vancouver Island

Andrew Oaken
Stag Special

Who was Col Josiah G. Holmes?

This past August, *Stag* editor Jules Xavier shared with me a photograph of what appeared to be the grave of a high-ranking military officer while visiting historic Ross Bay Cemetery in BC's capital on Vancouver Island.

In 1871, Col Holmes was one of the founding officers of A Bty in Kingston, Ont. He had the distinction of being the first Commanding Officer (CO) of C Bty in Esquimalt, BC, from 1887 to 1893.

He was the last surviving officer of Canada's original permanent force.

In part, Canada created A and B Batteries to protect Fort Henry and the Citadel, perform garrison duties after the British left, and serve as Schools of Gunnery. A and B Battery still exists today in sub-units of 1RCHA.

We should remember our great military past and the early trailblazers who helped make it happen. At the RCA Museum, we do not have much on Col Holmes.

We have a few letters from family members, a photo from his 85th birthday, and an image of C Bty on the Skeena River dated 1888. There is more to this exciting story.

Josiah Greenwood Holmes was born on Nov. 10, 1845 in St. Catharines, Upper Canada, and educated at Grantham Academy. He grew up in a respected family.

His father, Thorpe Holmes, was the owner and publisher of the *St. Catharines Journal*. His father was the founding president of the St. Catharines Rifle Association.

In the early 1860s, as a young volunteer militia soldier, Col Holmes joined the 19th Regiment Lincoln Militia. He fought in the famous Battle of Ridgeway as a volunteer militiaman on June 2, 1866.

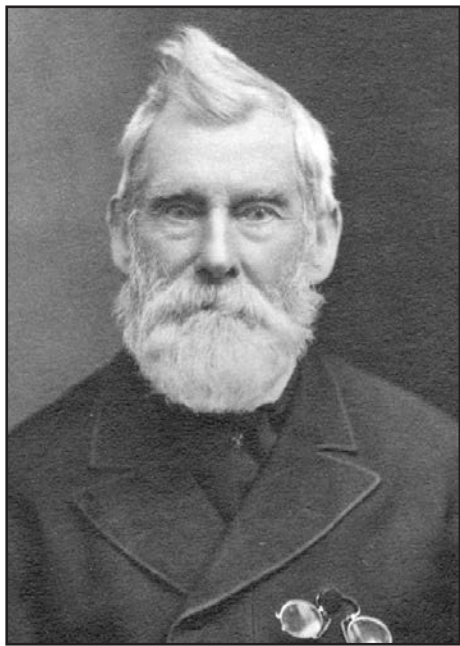
In November 1866, then Lt Holmes joined the St. Catharines Garrison Battery, which began a long career in artillery.

He received the Canadian General Service medal with two clasps for the Fenian Raids, 1866 and 1870. He married Elizabeth Kew of Beamsville, Ont., in 1870 and had two sons and three daughters.

In 1871, as a young lieutenant and graduate of RMC, he joined A Bty in Kingston, the first regular component in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

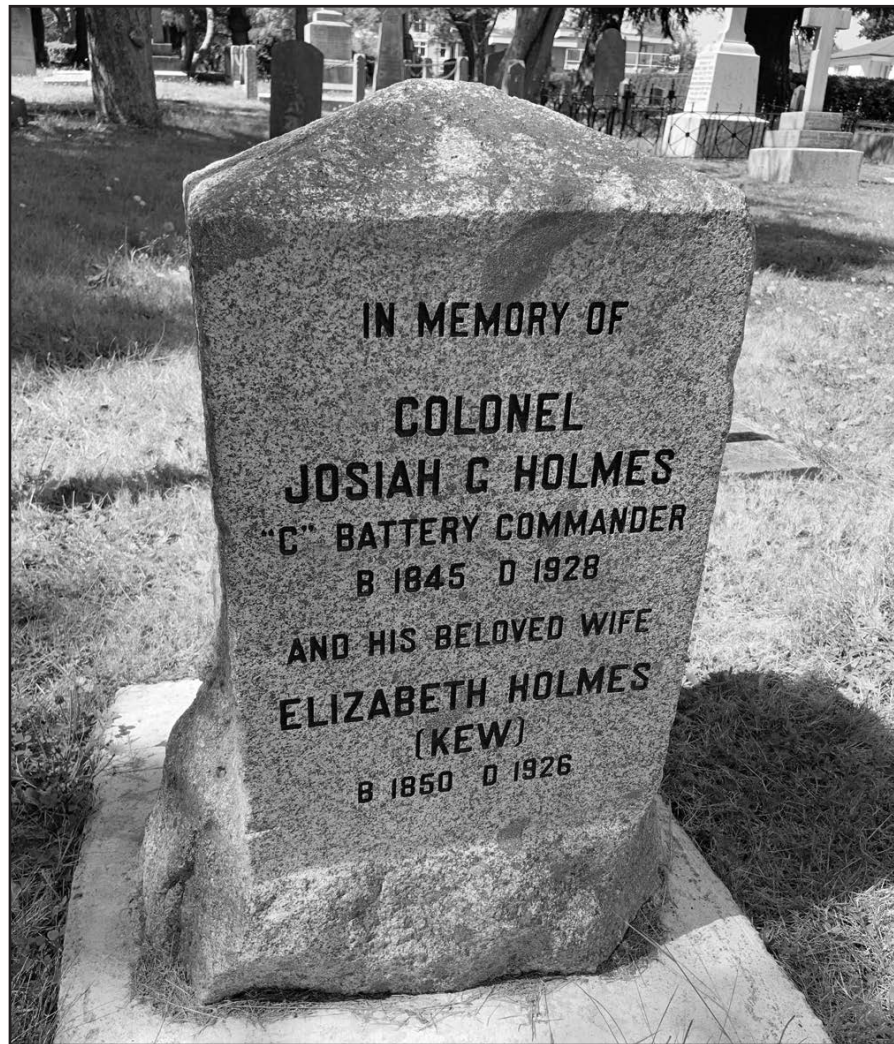
During the 1870s and early 1880s, he served as one of the first adjutants of A Bty. He was a keen rifleman and a member of the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association.

Among his tasks at A Bty was leading the riflemen during public shooting displays. He was a gifted essayist.



Long retired from military service as CO of C Bty in Victoria, BC, Col Holmes died on May 17, 1928 at age 83.

Photo RCA Museum



Stag editor Jules Xavier came across this special memorial to C Bty CO Col Josiah Holmes in the historic Ross Bay Cemetery on Vancouver Island, and shared it with RCA Museum director Andrew Oaken, who then did research to learn more about the artillery officer using his museum's resources.



A younger Col Josiah Holmes posed for this official photograph.

Photo BC Archives

From 1898 to 1901, he commanded Military District No. 11 in Victoria, BC, for a second time. He was the District Officer in command from 1901 to 1909.

During his tenure, Col Holmes witnessed many early developmental and organizational changes in the Canadian Army. He was a part of the pre-Confederation Active Militia, whose purpose was, in part, local defence.

He joined one of Canada's first regular and full-time army units in 1871. In 1883, Canada formed the Permanent Corps and the Regiment of Canadian Artillery.

He was also there for the formation of the Permanent Force in 1892. Additionally, he commanded the third regular and full-time army unit, C Bty, from its founding in 1887 to 1893.

Col Holmes was there when the Artillery changed names to "The Royal Canadian Artillery" in 1893. Two years later, he was there when the Active Militia field and garrison units joined the Regiment.

In 1898, the Permanent Force reorganized into the Field Division and the Garrison Division. These names changed again in 1901 to "Royal Canadian Field Artillery" and "Royal Canadian Garrison Artillery."

He was also there in 1905 when Canada formed the "Royal Canadian Horse Artillery." Col Holmes lived through many critical early developments of the Regiment and the CAF.

Col Holmes was a trailblazer and leader of change in the Canadian Artillery. As the first CO of Military District 11, he established local defences and assisted with early law enforcement in BC. He helped merge and organize the permanent force and laid the groundwork for future successors. The Formation of A, B, and C Batteries played a vital role in developing the Canadian Army.

His full-time service with the Canadian Militia and later the Permanent Force lasted for 38 years. He retired in 1909. After retirement, he lived in Victoria, BC, and was an active and respected community member. From 1909 to 1920, he served as the Honourary Colonel of the Rocky Mountain Rangers in Kamloops.

His death on May 17, 1928 at age 83 — meant he was the last of the group of officers of the original Permanent Force of the Dominion.

In his obituary in daily BC newspapers it was written his qualities as a soldier were respected. He inspired discipline among those under him. His efficiency will always be remembered in Canadian military records.

He was buried in the family plot in historic Ross Bay Cemetery with full military honours. His pall bearers included Gen Sir Percy Lake, Gen A.J.L. McNaughton, DOC, and Col (Dr) E.C. Hart. With his casket draped in the Union Jack, it was conveyed on a gun carriage to the cemetery for burial. His wife died two years earlier on Aug. 12 at age 76.

Besides a new modern military grave stone over his grave, a 19th Century granite survey marker from the defunct Work Point Barracks opened in 1887, became another headstone to him and wife, who had died on Aug. 12, 1926 at age 76.

Col Holmes' son William also had a distinguished military career, when he was the first CO of the 102nd Regiment, Rocky Mountain Rangers. He served in this posting from 1908 to Feb. 1912. He was instrumental in amalgamating all independent rifle companies in BC's interior.

During the Great War, then LCol Holmes was in command of the 48th Battalion, which was later converted to the 3rd Canadian Pioneer Corps.

At the end of the First World War, he was in command of the Canadian Corps Reinforcement Camp at Etaples, France.

He died at age 82 on July 10, 1954, but was not buried in the family plot alongside his father. Instead, he was buried at Royal Oak Burial Park Cemetery in Victoria, BC.

Want to play hockey using Gunner Arena? Base facility has 'return to play' protocols in place

Shilo Stag

There are few general 'return to play' protocols in place if you want to use Gunner Arena as a spectator or as a hockey player/coach.

- Coaches/instructors/participants must use the self-screening tool before coming to the facility. Go online and visit <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

- Coaches/instructors/participants must stay home when ill and users are not allowed entry if they are ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

- Coaches/instructors/participants must be given information on social distancing protocols, hand washing, etc. Visit online <http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/restoring/guidance.html>

- Hockey rosters must be provided for all facility bookings prior to access to the facility. Rosters must include all participants, including coaches and referees. Rosters will be used to determine access to the facility.

- There will be no signing out of hockey equipment.

- Only two dressing rooms per user group will be available. This will allow for proper physical distancing within the rooms.

- Parents/guardians/spectators are not permitted to congregate in the lobby at any time. Upon entrance into the facility they are to go immediately to the designated viewing area unless required to help their child in the dressing. Once a child is dressed then parents are to report immediately to the designated viewing area.

- All employees and users must adhere to physical distancing guidelines by standing and sitting at least two metres away from other people throughout the facility.

- Distancing markers will be throughout the facility, located on floors and benches, indicating proper distancing.

- Spectators will be limited to one individual per on-ice participant. For single parents, or families with a deployed spouse, younger siblings will be allowed. However, they are to sit with the parent in the stands. There will be no running around or playing in the facility while spectating.

- The number of participants permitted on the ice is up to the maximum roster size as per the Hockey Manitoba constitution, regu-



COVID-19 protocols are in place for Gunner Arena users, whether you are playing or watching hockey, or your kids are doing free skate or sticks and pucks.

Photos Jules Xavier/Shilo Stag



lations and rules of competition handbook.

- While Hockey Canada says you can dress 19 players, and have five staff working a game, benches should be limited to up to 10 participants — including coaches/staff.

- Maximum of one person in the timekeeper box. Only exception will be for users who reside in the same household.

- Absolutely NO spitting or fighting or squirting of water bottles onto the arena floors at any time. A zero tolerance policy regarding spitting and fighting will be enforced and individuals may be asked to leave the premises and have future bookings suspended.

- Physical contact for goal celebrations is prohibited, including hugging and high-fiving. There will be no handshakes at the conclusion of a game or scrimmage.

- Showers are not to be used at this time.

- Participants should bring their own labeled water bottle(s).

- Masks are to be worn within the facility, except while participating in on-ice activities, until otherwise directed.

What about arriving or departure from Gunner Arena?

- Entrance to the facility will be through the main north doors and exit from the facility will be through the west doors between the office and equipment room.

- Participants will not be allowed to enter the facility through the main doors until 15 minutes prior to their ice time. It is highly encouraged that players come already dressed minus skates, gloves and helmet.

- Upon arrival, participants are to use the hand sanitizer and proceed directly to their dressing rooms.

- Participants and coaches/instructors must follow designated pathways and remain in dressing room until the designated ice time and/or departure. Congregating or standing in hallways or common areas is not permitted at this time.

- We ask that all users remove skates/equipment and leave the facility no more than 15 minutes after the end of their ice time so rooms can be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.

For the safety of Gunner Arena staff and other users, any violation of these COVID-19 protocols by participants/coaches/instructors will result in cancellation of all future bookings.

For information call 204-765-3000 ext 3326.



Stay safe Halloween night

With another Halloween on the Base Oct. 31, parents are reminded to following provincial COVID-19 protocols during their evening outing with the kids. If you are giving out candy, remember a mask and use an implement where you are not touching the goodies being handed out.

*Photos Jules Xavier
Shilo Stag*

Civilians advised to receive flu shot during COVID-19 pandemic

LCdr Chet Mecham
Stag Special

To all our civilian colleagues — given the current COVID-19 pandemic it is more important than ever to get vaccinated against influenza.

Being immunized will: decrease your risk of contracting influenza; decrease symptom severity if you do get influenza; decrease your risk of transmitting influenza to others, including the vulnerable — children, pregnant people, those with chronic health conditions and older adults — minimize time off work in self-isolation; and help decrease the burden on the health care system during this critical time.

The influenza vaccine is now available at local pharmacies. You can be vaccinated by calling your pharmacy of choice to ask about their procedure — walk-in versus appointment.

Prairie Mountain Health flu vaccination clinics are another option. You can call 1-877-646-3888 starting Nov. 1 to book appointments at the Keystone Centre in the MNP Hall starting Nov. 17. Clinics run 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Or visit www.prairiemountainhealth.ca

LCdr Chet Mecham, Base/Flight Surgeon, 11 H Svcs C Shilo

After war ended medic spent three decades working with veterans



Cpl (Ret'd) John Pauls poses with his wife Mary (nee Friesen) while in his Army uniform before going overseas. The couple married in 1947. Once he arrived in Italy to start helping injured Allied soldiers or POWs, he wore shorts. During a dinner the Second World War veteran sat with RCAF comrades.

Photos supplied

From page 8

He was so used to sleeping on the hard ground during the war that he wound up there rather than sleep in a soft bed beside his wife.

Early photographs of Pauls during basic training show a shy smile and gentle, innocent eyes. Later, as the war progressed and photos continued, Pauls eyes took on a weariness which only one who has experienced war firsthand could show.

After his release, Pauls continued to serve veterans as a medical orderly and eventually a supervisor for the next 30 years until he retired at Deer Lodge Veterans Hospital in Winnipeg.

He lived in Winnipeg with his wife and his children. Pauls continued communicating with the people he befriended overseas during the war, visiting them when he could.

Pauls remained in the family home long after his wife died and only moved out when he turned 100 after falling down a flight of stairs.

It was when the family began cleaning out his house in

preparation for its sale, they discovered his massive war memorabilia collection.

"We couldn't throw it out," said Laucht.

And so the hunt to donate to a military museum began.

"We had visited [CFB] Shilo twice. When Shilo was so open to accepting the collection, it encouraged us to make the donation," she said. His collection of war memorabilia lay between the RCA museum and 11 CF Health Services Centre where a display case will show Pauls' extensive collection eventually once completed by staff at the RCA Museum. Pauls' medals include the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal (UK) as well as the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal plus clasp.

Back at the long-term care home where Pauls' resides, Laucht regularly visits her father. On one occasion during a conversation, she asked him if there's anything he'd rather be doing?

With a twinkle in his eye and a little smirk he replied, "Standing on my head."

"He hasn't lost his sense of humour," Laucht added with a chuckle.



Visit RCA Museum, Canada's national artillery museum has re-opened
To book an appointment to visit, call 204-765-3000 ext 3570

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\$10 for first 20 words, 10¢ for each additional word

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Free ads (non-profit only) restricted to members of the CAF, employees of CFB Shilo and the residents of the surrounding area.

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Greg Steele Canadian Firearms safety course instructor/examiner. Manitoba hunter safety instructor. CFSC, CRFFC safety courses offered at least monthly and on demand. Firearm/hunter safety courses scheduled monthly. Restricted and non-restricted. Dial 204-729-5024 E-mail gsteel4570@gmail.com

Services

Need your taxes done? Fast, friendly, and personal service. Located outside the gate. For all your income tax needs contact Ingrid Wasserberg at 204-763-4357. OPEN ALL YEAR.

Services

Looking for a job on the Base? Submit resumes to NPF HR office via e-mail quoting competition # to npfhrshilo@cfmws.com OR for more detailed information on the jobs offered at CFB Shilo visit: www.cfmws.com

Employment

CANEX needs you: Sales associate part-time position with 13 to 32 hr /week required. Must be available days/evenings, and weekends. Starting salary is \$12.53 per hour, progressing to \$14.77 per designated pay band. Under the direction of the department supervisor, a clerk/cashier scans customer purchases, processes transactions, and accepts payment. He/she prices, stocks shelves, counters and display areas with merchandise and keeps stock in order. He/she performs cleaning duties as required. Apply in person at CANEX admin office, or NPF Human Resources office at base HQ.



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It was a frigid morning at sunrise when all of 1RCHA left the compound to participate in the 40th annual Terry Fox Run. The event went to the dogs, with many soldiers bringing their canine companions along for the run, walk or ride. A few parents also brought their kids along for the event that raises money for cancer research.

Photos Jules Xavier
Shilo Stag



WE WILL REMEMBER THEM
NOUS NOUS SOUVIENDRONS D'EUX
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