



November 2024

Table of Contents

1. ***THE POPPY: its history, the women behind the poppy, the Canadian Legion***
2. ***IN MEMORIA: Remembering the fallen, family, relatives and friends***
3. ***EDITORIAL: why the commemoration***
4. ***POLITICAL DESK: messages***
5. ***OPEN LETTER TO CBC OMBUDSMAN, Jack Nagler***
6. ***RICHARD'S DESK: Kudos to the Town of Uxbridge***
7. ***FERMO'S DESK: Dogs have served courageously since ancient times***
8. ***HEALTH: Grief in soldiers returning from combat; coping with grief***
9. ***BOOKS: Book talk from Gail, Heather and Richard***
10. ***TRAVEL: Escorted Tours by CanXplore***
11. ***LAST WORD: Thank you everyone!***

THE POPPY



In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies grow
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



John McCrae

In Flanders Fields

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.

Dr. John McCrae composed the poem, "In Flanders Fields," on May 3, 1915, after presiding over the funeral of his friend and fellow soldier, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, who was killed in the Second Battle of Ypres.

McCrae wrote the poem near Ypres, Belgium, where he was serving as a field surgeon with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Initially dissatisfied with his work, McCrae reportedly discarded the poem, but it was retrieved by fellow soldiers. The poem was first published anonymously in Punch magazine on December 8, 1915.

Symbolism and Impact

The poem's powerful imagery, particularly the use of poppies blooming among the graves, led to the adoption of the red poppy as a symbol of remembrance for fallen soldiers.

This tradition continues to this day in many countries, especially during Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Legacy

"In Flanders Fields" quickly gained popularity during World War I and was used to further the war effort, raise funds for troops, and recruit American soldiers as the United States prepared to enter the conflict.

Today, the poem is read by millions around the world each Remembrance Day, serving as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made during wartime.

The poem's enduring impact is evident in various commemorations:

- A history museum in Ypres, Belgium, is named after the poem
- The special exhibition gallery in the Canadian War Museum is named for McCrae
- The poem has been set to music and is used in Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ottawa

John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" remains a powerful testament to the human cost of war and continues to resonate with people across generations, ensuring that the memory of fallen soldiers is never forgotten

The History of POPPY

"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."

These words captured the haunting imagery of the poppies flourishing in the midst of tragedy and served as a powerful symbol of remembrance for the soldiers who had sacrificed their lives in battle.

The women behind the Poppy

The poem quickly gained widespread recognition and resonance among the allied nations involved in World War I. **Moina Michael**, an American professor and humanitarian, was deeply moved by McCrae's words and resolved to wear a red poppy in memory of the fallen soldiers. She penned her own poem, "[*We Shall Keep the Faith*](#)," to express this sentiment.



The tradition of wearing red poppies to honor veterans and remember the sacrifices of soldiers was further popularized by **Madame Anna E. Guérin**, the [*Poppy Lady from France*](#), who collaborated with the American Legion to promote the idea of selling artificial poppies as a means of raising funds to support veterans. The American Legion officially adopted the red poppy as a symbol of remembrance in 1920.



The Royal British Legion takes up the Poppy campaign

In 1921, the poppy became a universal symbol of remembrance when the newly formed British Royal Legion began selling red poppies to raise funds for veterans. Today, the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal is a well-known and respected annual tradition in the United Kingdom and far beyond. The poppy's association with remembrance and honoring veterans extended to various other countries and conflicts, including Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It has become a powerful symbol that transcends national boundaries and serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by those who have served in times of war.

Donate to the Canadian Legion, buy some products at [**LEGION STORE**](#)

In memoria...



Remembering them...



No words can convey the pain felt with the loss of a loved one, as painful even if lost in battle. The pain never stops completely, it only diminishes with time, fading ever so slowly but nevertheless, remaining.

Many served, some returned, others did not. We remember them.

Lt. Col. *Sam Sharpe*, one of our earliest victims of *PTSD*

[The material about Lt. Col. Sam Sharpe is based on a visit to the Town of Uxbridge and seeing the commemorative material and war memorials the town has on its streets and sidewalks.]



Sam Sharpe, an average young man, was born and raised in the Uxbridge area, just north of Toronto, the population of which was barely more than 2000 residents at beginning of the 1900s. When Sam was 16, impassioned by his patriotism and loyalty to Canada, he joined the 34th Ontario Regiment, a local militia infantry unit.

Sam did well academically. A university attendee and a graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School, he was a barrister and solicitor in Uxbridge, a rising star among the professionals of the community. He was an elder in the Methodist Church, a Master in the Masonic Lodge. He was elected to the House of Commons as a Conservative Party member in 1908. He was re-elected in 1911 and was a rising member,



one point considered for the cabinet ministry of Minister of Militia and Defense. In short, he was a well-respected and well-known professional in the Uxbridge community.

When WWI broke out, Sam had already served in the local militia for many years. It was inevitable that he would enlist. He was commissioned decades before the war started and rose to rank of major and second-in-command in the 34th regiment by the time the war started.

The news of the war's outbreak moved Sam to more than just serve. He was determined to recruit as many young men from the region as possible to serve in the Canadian military. He recruited relatives, friends, every able-bodied person he could find. He was very successful in the endeavour enlisting over 1000 young recruits from a population of just 2000 residents.

In 1916, his battalion sailed from Halifax on the RMS *Olympic* (sister ship of the ill-fated *Titanic*) a rather ominous omen. The battalion was deployed to France in early 1917.

The first engagement for the battalion came in April when they manned the front-line trenches at Vimy Ridge. Casualty numbers were low but fatal for Sam. He lost his closest friend, Lieutenant Tom Hutchinson, a loss which affected him very badly and began the erosion of his mental well-being.

In the summer of 1917, the battalion was redeployed to the Western Front. Sam lost his best friend at Vimy Ridge but in 1917, the incredible losses suffered by his battalion would destroy him emotionally. Passchendaele was the last straw. Hundreds of his young recruits were killed. As ranking officer, his duty was to write letters home to inform the soldiers' families of their loss. Each letter tore another layer from Sam's psyche.



The warfare impacted every soldier to various degrees. Many suffered shell shock from the constant barrage of the artillery. Sam suffered much more than his fellow soldiers, probably because of his letter writing duties. Eventually, he wrote more than a 1000 letters. Dear Mary,..., Dear Helen,...Dear Joan,...Dear Zoe,...it was a treadmill of agony and sorrow that devastated him emotionally.

His first breakdown came in early 1918. As his military career rose, he received the Distinguished Service Order in January 1918, but his

emotional well-being disintegrated. 'Shell shock,' the name given to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at the time, was not viewed as an illness then. Rather, soldiers suffering the illness at the time were labeled as cowards. Being labeled a coward was too much for Sam's psyche to bear and it marked the beginning of the end for him. He had devoted half of his life to Canadian military service. He fought at Vimy. He fought at Passchendaele. He had recruited more than 1000 young people, all killed. He lost his best friend. He lost almost all the young men he had recruited. Each letter he wrote ripped away another layer from his unstable emotions.

First, he was admitted to the Canadian Convalescence Hospital in Buxton, but his condition declined. He was invalided to the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. The damage of his front-line service, the loss of his best friend, Tom, the impact of the loss of over 1000 recruits was too much to bear. The toll was too much. On May 25, 1918, he jumped to his death through a fourth-floor hospital window to the pavement below. He was 41 years old.

The *AZIZ* family



Remembering my Parents

When you ask a veteran about their war experience, they are only too happy to tell you the adventures they had or the funny things that happened. Digging into the real story can often bring tears and shaking heads. Both my parents, Arthur and Winifred, were Second World War Vets, and yet their stories, experiences, and involvement in the war were completely different.

My father, Arthur, grew up in Toronto, Ontario, and had a job as an instrument designer and maker (This was usually mechanical gauges used to measure pressure.) at the beginning of the war. Art and his buddies followed the news of the war and decided together to enlist in the Canadian Army on October 16, 1941. My father completed his basic training at the Canadian Forces Base Borden, Ontario. This is also where my Father received his training on military tanks at the Canadian Tank School (Base Borden).

In late 1942, my father received orders he was being shipped to England. As a young child, I remember my father entertaining us at mealtimes with stories about his adventures crossing the Atlantic in January 1943. His ship sailed from New York on a very cold day. Soldiers were told to stay below decks. Amid rough seas, seasickness, cramped quarters, and card games, the soldiers rejoiced after three days when they spotted the lights of land, only to be told it

was Halifax. This is where their ships joined the Royal Canadian Navy convoy to make the Atlantic crossing. My father described in detail, the role of each ship in the convoy- troop ships, merchant ships, destroyers, and corvettes. While crossing in the convoy, one merchant ship was hit by German U-boats. My father described watching it sink as they sailed by. No ships in the convoy were allowed to stop to give assistance due to the danger of more ships being hit by U- U-boats.

Upon arriving in London, my father was quickly shipped to Aldershot, England where he spent the rest of his time in England repairing the instruments of military tanks. Although he didn't see military action, I can't help but reflect on the commitment of my father and many young men to support the war effort. Sacrifices and lives were "put on hold" in order to defend our democracy.

My mother 's stories were completely different. She seldom volunteered information or stories about the war. It was only as an adult, when I took my mother (Win) back to her birthplace - London, England, that I got a good glimpse into the life of a young woman in London during the war. My mother was born in London and received an excellent education. She received many scholarships and in 1937 passed the examinations needed to work for the London County Council. Here, she worked in the Public Health Department in Central London Office adjacent to Big Ben. Women like my mother, were trained to fill the void left by men who were now in the armed forces. She was transferred to Highgate Hospital to process air raid victims. Since the war had a slow beginning, She was transferred once again to Whitehall at Westminster to work with patients suffering from Tuberculosis.

As the war progressed, London became a dangerous place due to the heavy bombing. Nightly the city was attacked by buzz bombs, rockets fired from Holland, incendiary bombs, and bombers. During air raids, many Londoners would seek shelter, as Win 's family did, in shelters built in their backyards. These shelters had concrete floors, cement block walls, and a tin roof covered with sandbags. All houses had blackout curtains on their windows. Cars' headlights were also covered except for a thin cross for the light to shine through. It was during one of these air raids that Win 's family house was hit by a bomb. Her family had to move to a flat and during air raids were now required to descend deep into the subway system for the remainder of the night. During the raids, the bombers often followed the Thames River into the heart of London. Therefore, often government buildings were easy targets for bombs. All government employees were trained in firefighting in case an incendiary bomb hit their building. My mother received this training in order to protect Whitehall. She was equipped with a water pump, a scoop, and a bucket of sand. She explained that workers were on teams of 2 or 3 and when their turn arrived they stayed all night in order to protect their building. If a bomb hits its mark on the roof, your team scurried out onto the roof and with a water pumper and sand, to put out the fire. This happened to her a few times. After her death, while I was going through her army papers I found a letter from the Home Guard of London commending her for her service on the night of August 16th/17th, 1941 for protecting Whitehall.

In 1941 Win enlisted in the army and joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (which was a division of the army). She was sent to Trowbridge in Southern England to receive six months of

training as a special wireless operator. Upon completion, she was stationed in the Village of Loughborough in the County of Leicester. The women were housed in Neissan huts. Each operator worked a radio unit listening to a specific frequency (This was usually an ultra-high frequency). They were listening for signals and/or messages that came through rapidly in Morse code. Messages came in blocks of five and often an operator recognized the sender by the touch sound of the Morse code. All the messages were from the military. Similar to the decoding done at Bletchley Park, this decoding was top secret and all operators were required to take the Official Secrets Act. My mother took this oath and well into her late eighties refused to disclose the information they gathered.

My mother later married a Canadian soldier, my father. Her life continued to feel the effects of war life as she became a War Bride and immigrated to Canada to start a new life. This became another difficult period in her life.

Both my parents taught me to have great respect for our soldiers. From listening to and understanding the events that shaped their early adult years, I wonder if I would have had the grit and determination they did. I know every Remembrance Day when I hear the last post played and I see soldiers salute the flag, I always try to swallow the huge lump in my throat and fight tears for the contribution my parents and many other soldiers made to protect our democracy. I wear my Poppy faithfully and respectfully for our country 's war heroes.

by **Gail Aziz**

The **BERGERSON** family



Edgar M. Jackson

My father was born in June 1911, and was raised on a farm in West Gwillimbury in an area called '*the Hollows.*' He enlisted in 1942. He was 31 years old and felt he needed to defend our freedom.

Dad's basic training was at Canadian Forces Base Borden. He served for just over three years (from December 7, 1942 to February 13, 1946). When he was finally sent to the war front, he



was stationed in France, Holland, Belgium and Britain.

Ranked as a corporal, dad's main role was to drive ammunition vehicles to supply the front lines. To minimize the danger in driving these trucks, the transportation was done mostly at night, under camouflage with the truck's lights masked as slotted black-out headlights. The work was no easy task. Often, he drove with the night sky above lit up by bomb explosions and artillery fire. The fear that his vehicle would be hit was his constant passenger.

My dad survived the war, but his return trip home was another matter. The troop carrying ship, the Queen Mary, was hit by a horrendous Atlantic storm. At times the ship was atop of 40 foot waves, the next moment in the trough below the the same gigantic waves. The shipped bobbed on the stormy waves like a helpless cork. Many of the soldiers aboard were terribly seasick. None expected to survive this crossing and return home. They did, eventually arriving safely to New York. The troops cheered with joy and celebration when the ship finally docked.

From New York, the veterans were then transported to Toronto, to the CNE Colosseum, where they were reunited with family and loved ones.

My dad will always be remembered.

by *Evelyn Bergerson*

The **BREWSTER** family



Jim and Joseph Ryan

My three uncles, Jim and Joe, maternal-side, twins, served in the Canadian armed forces. Uncle Joe served in the RCAF and trained Canadian pilots in Harvards.



Jim was in the Military Police and was fortunate to survive the war. He continued service after the war as a Military Police officer stationed in Germany for many years. He retired in Canada from his job in security for Simpson Sears.

My uncle Joe (1921-144) was unfortunate. Sergeant Joe Ran served in the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry. He was killed in action in France when munitions landed in their foxhole. He had intended to become an Anglican minister after the war.

Bruce Singleton (nephew)

The **COOK** family





Chief Warrant Officer Frederick Isaac Cook, CD (Ret'd)

**Private Garner Cook, Canadian Expeditionary Force,
Nova Scotia Highlanders, 85th Battalion, WWI and Home Guard, WWII
1894 - 1967**

My grandfather, Garner Cook, joined the movement of East Coast farmers who volunteered to defend Canada, inexperienced for battle, with no formal training, all who signed on in Halifax, boarded a steamer for Europe with a uniform and a prayer.

*"The story of the role played by the 85th Battalion in the battle of Vimy Ridge has become almost mythical. Raised as part of what became a great province-wide undertaking over a few weeks in the fall of 1915, it had only just arrived at the front in February 1917 and was still waiting to take its place in the line of battle. On the morning of 9 April, when all four divisions of the Canadian Corps attacked together for the first time in the First World War, the 85th was relegated to acting as a work battalion, to help repair trenches and carry out other tasks behind the initial advance. Within a few hours, Canadians had captured almost the entire ridge, and only the two highest points held out: the **"Pimple"** and **Hill 145** (the summit where Canada's Vimy Memorial now stands). Having seen all of his existing battalions broken up attempting to capture Hill 145, the 11th Brigade's commanding officer, Brigadier-General Victor Odlum, turned to the 85th to attempt one more advance before the end of the day. "C" and "D" companies under Captains Harvey Crowell and Percival Anderson were charged with the task."*

[From the Canadian Military Journal <https://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/Vol17/no2/page34-eng.asp>]

The rest is legendary. The Hill was captured, and Vimy secured.

My grandfather contracted pneumonia, which most assuredly saved his life. He was spared from the Somme and lived to raise 8 children.

He continued his military service as Home Guard during WWII, protecting the mouth of the Fundy Tidal Bore on the Atlantic Ocean between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, scanning the open waterway for German U-Boats. Thanks, Grampie. Love you.



Frederick Isaac Cook, CD
Chief Warrant Officer
1936 - 2017

My uncle Fred joined the Canadian Army in 1958 with the Royal Canadian Engineers. After completing his basic Field Engineer training at the Royal Canadian School of Military Engineering (RCSME) at Camp Chilliwack BC he remained in Vedder Crossing with the RCSME Demonstration Troop. From there Fred was posted to 4 Field Squadron in Germany. When he returned to Canada he started on an Airborne career path – first with 1 Field Squadron, Petawawa, ON and then with 1 Airborne Field Squadron in Edmonton, AB starting in 1968. After Edmonton he was stationed in Camp Gagetown, NB – first with 2 Field Squadron and then with the Base Construction Engineering Section. In 1982 Fred was appointed Regimental Sergeant Major of 2 Combat Engineer Regiment in Petawawa where he served until his retirement in 1985.

Uncle Fred was a former president of the **Lions Club Foundation of Canada** in Sackville, NB. After he retired, was a leading advocate of the **Lions Club Foundation Dog Guides of Canada program**. Ink is a member of the Autism Assistance Service Dogs of Canada doing his service for the Cook family in Canada. **Fred Cook** has done his duty and now rests in peace.

Ink, is a black Labrador retriever, a member of the *Autism Assistance Service Dogs of Canada*. and has been a magical assistant to our family for many years. Today, he continues his work but at a higher level as he works with a family member at university in New Brunswick. He's an amazing and wonderful assist helping our family. Thanks Uncle Fred. Love you.



Lest We Forget

On behalf of the Cook family, to all retired and serving military and those we lost through combat and friendly fire, lest we forget, thank you. The freedoms won by these brave men, women and the animals who assisted should not be lost through time. We also honour the families of all military personnel who supported and loved those who sacrificed so we can walk free. For those who have returned and face trauma and live with the difficulty of choices made, you are not alone. Assistance is available through the [Royal Canadian Legion Provincial Command](#).

Linda Cook (granddaughter and niece)

Deputy Mayor & Regional Councillor

The **GIRARDI** family



My father served in the Italian army for 10 years. It was WWII. It was conscription for all able-bodied young men. He served throughout Europe: France, Albania, Montenegro, Greece, and Yugoslavia.

He was a member of the Alpini Regiment, the Mountain troops. These soldiers trained and served in mountainous regions where temperatures always ranged from cold to extreme winter cold.

Unfortunately, the soldiers' uniforms were not made for this climate.

My father never wanted to talk about his army service, but I remember snippets.

One winter after a twelve-hour march through mountainous terrain, he and his squad found what they thought was a safe place to camp for the night. Extremely tired, they tried to cook up a meal. The only food they had was some rice which they began to cook in buckets of melted snow. Suddenly, they received a warning the enemy was nearby. Tired and hungry, they gobbled down the partially cooked rice. He was very sick that night.

While stationed in France, he learned to speak French to his great satisfaction. While in Yugoslavia he met a young woman and fell in love with her name, the name I got, Nadia.

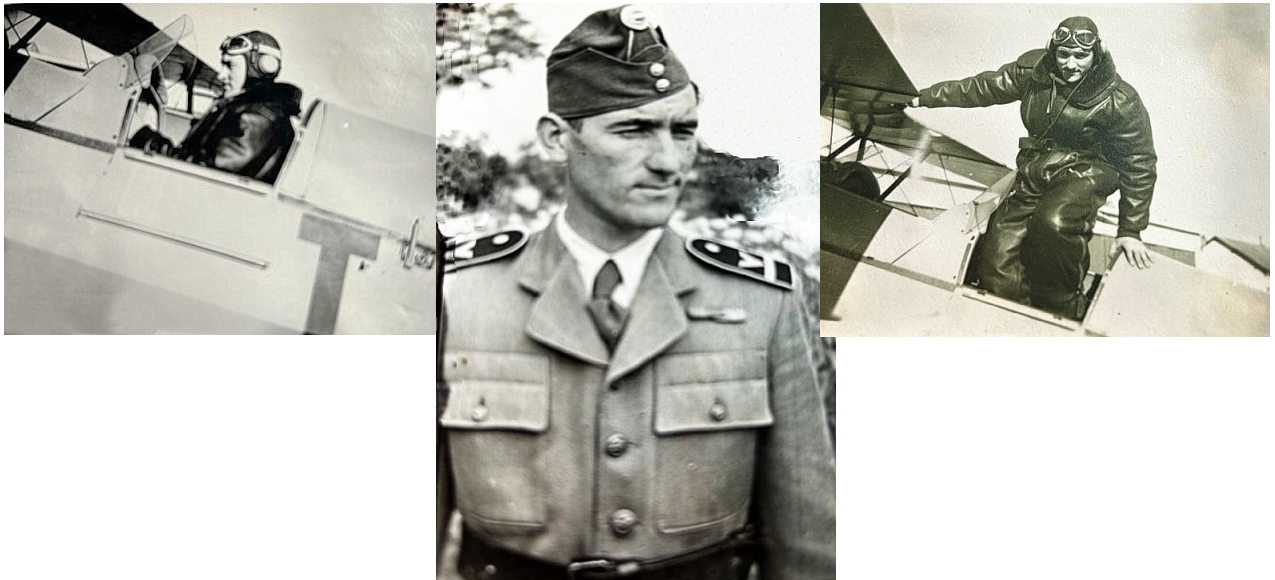
Many of the young soldiers had left girlfriends behind with whom they wished to communicate but it was always difficult to compose original and meaningful letters. My father always loved writing and composing. He was recruited to write letters for the young soldiers to mail back home.

My father had a tattoo of an eagle on his left forearm, the symbol of the Alpini. My father always lamented getting tattooed because the process made him extremely ill at the time. My young friends were always awed by my father's tattoo. As tattoos became fashionable, his teenage granddaughter thought her granddad was 'very cool' with his tattoo.

My father attained the rank of Sergeant Major, received the Medal of Valour, but most importantly, he returned home.

by *Nadia Girardi*

The **LEDENYI** family



REMEMBERING MY DAD

I wonder "Why did he fight in WWII? In the Hungarian Revolution of 1956?" "For Freedom! For Mankind! For Everyman kind!," would have been my father's response.

It breaks my heart to see images of suffering war victims that could easily be imposed over past pictures of war. And it still goes on and on and on.

My dad, *Joseph Ledényi*, was a very proud and accomplished Air Force pilot but he was not proud of the destruction his bombs caused. He was following orders.

My dad seldom talked about the war, but when he did, he spoke in somber tones in a reflective way. His eyes would cloud over, the pain of remembering very evident.

The Hungarian Air force was a very small one during that time and it was swallowed up by the German Air force. The Hungarian pilots had no other choice but to be a part of the bigger German command.

My dad recalled these military experiences in a bland manner, devoid of emotion. He did

what he had to do because he was a pilot and it was his job. He followed orders but within he planned to bomb open fields, with little success. He was part of a bombing squad following orders automatically, with no regard to the destruction caused. His training wouldn't allow it. He loved and lived for flying but viewed the war as evil, as dirty politics, as destructive!

He explained that he endured these grueling bombing runs because of the friendships and camaraderie of his fellow Hungarian pilots. My dad was an even-tempered man who made friends easily, so his small salvation was his Air Force colleagues. They were a very tight group of like-minded men, who loved to fly and wanted to serve their country. They supported each other; they leaned on each other; they mourned their fallen comrades but they never discussed any mission after its conclusion, its success or its failure. He remembered the sadness and weariness of war etched on the tired faces of his fellow pilots, none wanting to fly these missions but each forced to do so as they had to follow given orders.

My dad was never shot down, never wounded, never court-martialed as an enemy pilot. In my eyes, he was my hero; a gentleman, an air force pilot, whose words still ring true today, "War is evil; war is dirty politics; war destroys! But despite that, countless soldiers, men and women, fought for and defended freedom to the free world.

We thank you for your service.

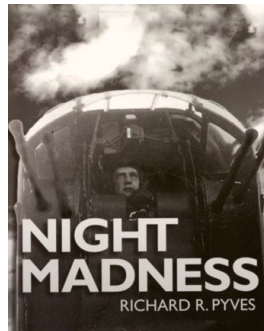
by *Eva*

Henn

The PYVES family



"Kathleen" for luck



Mission briefing



Kay Eason



Ron Leslie Pyves

Canadian author, Rick Pyves' memories of his father...

Rick Pyves is a Canadian author with three well-read works, two of which are military in scope.

- Night Madness - A Rear Gunner's Story of Love, Courage and Hope in WWII
- Courage, Sacrifice, Betrayal: The Story of the Victoria Rifles of Canada, 60th Battalion, in the First World War.

[This is not intended as a book promotion. However, Pyves writes military history and these books are very informative in regard to Canadian and British military services.]

Night Madness, which I highly recommend, is Pyves' tribute to his father, pilot officer Ronald Leslie Pyves, RCAF 434 Bluenose Squadron who flew on 35 combat ops over France, Germany, and Norway.

When Rick's mother passed in 2007, it led to the discovery of over 220 letters of correspondence between his mom and dad during WWII – a teenager's eye witness account to WWII – both overseas on the home front. This was the genesis for Rick's book *Night Madness* and a reconnection with his dad's military service which had so dramatically affected his dad's mental health.

Night Madness is an emotional and sensitive war story about Ronald Pyves, the author's father. It is far more than a recounting of a man's military service. Rather it is a touching tribute to a vet who returned home, shaken and traumatized by his military experience. Another real case of PTSD, something the Canadian military never acknowledged at that time.

Ronald Pyves was a tail gunner in a Canadian Royal Air Force bomber flying bombing missions over Germany. His most devastating mission was the bombing of the city of Dresden on Valentine's Day in 1945. The German city was targeted as it was a key transportation hub for the movement of German troops on the Western Front in reaction to the Russian army's penetration into Germany in early 1945. Although a necessary mission, with over 25,000 military and civilian casualties, Ron would later in life feel guilty about this particular mission although this was not the case for many aircrew who participated.

Pyves, the younger, dedicates his book to the memory of his father and his service but the

dedication goes further. All veterans are traumatized by their combat engagement to some degree with some so severely that the repercussions affect them long after their service days end. This awful mental illness is an agonizing mental personal battle known as PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder). The Pyves children saw the seriousness and extent of this emotional and mental suffering experienced by their father for many years after the war.

Another important goal of *Night Madness* is to prod the Canadian government into developing more and better psychological and medical assistance for all first responders including the armed forces veterans who have suffered debilitating mental trauma because of their military service.

Consider giving your support to the cause by reading Rick Pyves' ***Night Madness***.

View Rick Pyves' summary of his book at [NIGHT MADNESS](#).

by ***Rick Pyves***

The **ROBINSON** family



Andrew Irwin was Councillor Lisa Robinson's uncle. He served in the Royal Canadian Navy.

Mississauga Citizen of the Year **Andrew Irwin** has died at 92.

The Port Credit man is remembered as a proud Navy veteran.

Andrew Irwin, Mississauga's Citizen of the Year for 2017, has died at the age of 92. He is survived by three children, six grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

On May 25, his wife Elaine accepted the Cordon S. Shipp Memorial Award on Irwin's behalf at during the Mississauga Civic Awards reception.

"With all of the recognition he's had, it's wonderful." Elaine said. "I know he went as far as he could go. The doctors kept hoping we would be able to get him in a wheelchair and get him (to the awards ceremony), but that just didn't work.

Irwin's 92nd birthday was on May 28 and Ward 1 councillor Jim Tovey visited him in hospital to present him with his medal and plaque for earning the title of Citizen of the Year.

Irwin earned many medals of honour -including the Russian Medal of Ushakov and the French Legion of Honour - from his time serving with the Navy during the Second World War.

He was recognized as Citizen of the Year for his efforts in sharing his stories with schools and other community groups across Mississauga.

Tovey admired Irwin's desire to share his stories of the war when many others who fought along with him would have been shell-shocked.

"They went through some incredibly horrendous experiences," Tovey said. 'But here's Andy, who takes it on as his obligation and duty to let everybody know why they fought, what they fought for. And what that freedom means.

During the Second World War, he guided convoys on the Murmansk Run as they shipped vital supplies to the Russians in their fight against the Germans.

He was also on the gun crew of the HMCS Algonquin during the Invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

To help teachers develop teaching aids for Canada's role in the Second World War, he helped create An ABC of the Battle of the Atlantic. an online teaching resource.

An avid sailor and respected member of the Port Credit Yacht, Irwin spent 25 years as the 'foreman of the boat launch and haul.

As part of the Easter Seals Family Fun Day during the Port Credit Regatta, he took disabled children and their families out for an afternoon on the water.

He was a longtime participant in Port Credit's Canada Day parade and the Port Credit Legion's Remembrance Day parade.

Lisa Robinson

(niece)

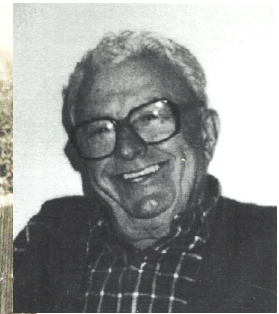
The **SZPIN** family



Polish officers' mess



Olga & John Szpin



my dad, 1996

Reluctant recollections of the war...

My father, *John Szpin*, a Polish cavalry soldier, was captured and imprisoned very soon after WWII started. Poland fought WWII as if it were WWI. Horses and infantry were no match for tanks and artillery. Poland was defeated in 6 short weeks.

As prisoner of war, his first imprisonment was relatively good as he was forced to work on a farm. He had access to food, clandestinely but as Germany began to lose the war, prisoner life changed. My father was put into a concentration camp for three years.

Life in the concentration camps was as brutal as movies portray. Likely worse as my father avoided talking about this period of his life. Over time, I learned bits and pieces about his prisoner days: cold, death a board cot away every night, days of bitter cold working outside in the winter, and worst of all, constant hunger, being starved to death.

I did learn things like...food was so scarce they made a soup from sawdust and potato peels. The winters were indescribably cold. Wood shavings were inserted into 'rag' shoes to insulate the feet.

When the British army liberated the camp, freeing the prisoners, my dad walked out a living skeleton. He guessed his weight at about 75 lbs. He was 5 ft, 8 in.

The British assigned work duties to the prisoners relative to what they did before the war. My dad astutely claimed to have been a cook and so was assigned to work in the British army's kitchens. Food, finally.

He worked as a cook for the British for next three years. When the British camps closed, my dad's destination of relocation was Canada as Britain's immigration quotas had been reached.

My father was very fortunate as a British officer, Canadian Forces, a wealth civilian remembered him and had him assigned to travel to Canada to be employed a hotel he owned. My father became a cook at the Windsor Hotel in Sault Ste. Marie in 1948, never to be hungry again but never forgetting his near starvation during WWII.

by *Richard Szpin*

The **WHITE** family





As the decades flash by there are probably not many people that can state that their father served in the WWI. Mine did. I didn't come along till he was 49 in 1945. His name was Harold William White.(upper right-hand corner). Also my grandfather, his brother(great Uncle), and his two sons(Dad's cousins) all went overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) was neither diagnosed or recognized for returning soldiers. My father suffered his entire life from that condition but never received any pension for it, nor recognition from the government. He died at the age of 69 in 1965. I enlisted with the Royal

Canadian Engineers in 1964 and trained in B.C. and N.B. as a combat Engineer. Our biggest training exercise was for NATO service, when I served with the 2nd. Field Squadron in Gagetown attached to the Black Watch infantry regiment in Newfoundland. We flew into the US SAC airbase in Stephenville in Hercules planes, NFLD. The USA was at war in Vietnam and the base was under wartime readiness. US army ,USAF, British, Irish, Canadian army and RCAF troops carried out field exercises all around the countryside of Stephenville, Port aux Basque, and Cornerbrook. Some of the poor locals living in the remoter areas thought the WW III had started. There was still snow on the eastern hilltops in June. We spent the first night on the base and visited with troops shipping out to fight overseas. I thought to myself that these guys looked awfully young. We were the same age; 18-20. Some were from farming communities. Not street wise as we were from the major cities. I don't think they knew what they were in for. During the month-long training exercise, we built non-construction bridges across rivers out of logs, cut down upstream, floated down to the construction site, captured, trimmed and fitted. Just like the British engineers did in the movie, "The Bridge on the River Kwai", screened in 1964. When training in Vedder Crossing, B.C., just outside Chilliwack, the base Commandant had bus loads of recruits driven into Vancouver for the grand premier showing of the movie. We had our summer dress uniforms on, and were marched down the main street to the theatre to the beat of a military band. It was a great spectacle that had the locals wondering what occasion was taking place.(on left side with Felix Katz). We also built an airfield out of the woods so small aircraft could land, and carried out field maneuvers. It was then that it struck me how well Canadian soldiers were trained throughout the ranks. We captured American positions with relative ease. I don't condone or glorify war. What we see on TV today from Ukraine and Gaza and Lebanon is beyond tragic. Innocent lives lost . Insanity. There would be no wars if only we could send the politicians who start them.

I am among the fortunate ones, those who served and returned home, safe. However, I know my family was very committed to Canada's military service as many of my family members served and one never returned.

Harold White, my father, served in the Royal Canadian Regiment, RCR, of New Brunswick, ultimately serving in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force. After 4 years of service, he returned home to Canada. His compensation for his service, medals. He never received any veteran's pension.

George White, my father's cousin, enlisted as a teen and fought in WWI with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He fought in what is known as the battles of the trenches. Sadly, he was a casualty of war.


John White, Jim's brother, my great, was another young Canadian who fought in WWI. He fought for the four years of the war. He survived but came back home a casualty from the experiences suffered in the war.

Jim White, my grandfather, enlisted soon after the outbreak of the war. He served with the Canadians who fought in the four years of the war and fortunately, he also returned home after the war.

Paul White

Editorial



 Please note: the **\$10 donation** for this Commemorative issue will be given to the **Royal Canadian Legion, Pickering, (Branch 606)**.
The **Royal Canadian Legion (Branch 606)** receives NO FINANCIAL SUPPORT from the national LEGION.

This *Commemorative issue* of *The Szpinner* newsletter is dedicated to the men and women who served their nations during WWI and WWII as well as other war fronts.

On **Remembrance Day** we ought to pause and reflect on the sacrifices made by these extraordinary individuals, their unwavering courage, and the indelible mark they have left behind.

With recalled stories and personal accounts, the *The Szpinner* newsletter honours the veterans of WWI, WWII, and other conflicts.

Join us as at the 11th hour of the 11th month as we pause to remember.

Many Canadian families suffered the tragic loss of a family member or close friend in wars Canadian forces battled. This commemorative newsletter is our way of honoring and paying respect to their memory.

Though they may have fallen, they live on in our memories and in our conversations as we reminisce about them. They are back with us for a moment.

Let us honour them in memories.

Please pause to remember on **November 11 at 11 am.**



Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day holds profound significance for Canadians, serving as an annual opportunity to honor and remember those who have served and sacrificed for their country. This solemn occasion, observed on November 11th each year, carries deep historical roots and continues to play a vital role in shaping Canada's national identity and values.

Historical Origins

Remembrance Day traces its origins to the end of World War I. On November 11, 1918, at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the Armistice agreement was signed, effectively ending the hostilities of the First World War

Initially known as *Armistice Day*, this date was chosen to commemorate the cessation of one of the deadliest conflicts in human history. In 1931, the Canadian Parliament officially changed the name to "*Remembrance Day*" to broaden its scope beyond just World War I.

This change reflected a desire to honor all those who had served in various conflicts, not just the Great War, WWI.

Significance and Meaning

For Canadians, Remembrance Day serves multiple purposes: Honoring the Fallen: At its core, Remembrance Day is about paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country. Over 118,000 Canadians have died in various conflicts throughout the nation's history

Recognizing Veterans: The day also acknowledges the contributions and sacrifices of all veterans, including those who survived but may have endured physical or psychological trauma.

Promoting Peace: While honoring military service, Remembrance Day also serves as a reminder of the horrors of war and the importance of striving for peace

National Unity

The shared act of remembrance helps foster a sense of national identity and unity among Canadians. Educating *future generations*: Remembrance Day plays a crucial role in educating younger Canadians about their country's military history and the value of service and sacrifice.

Symbols and Traditions

Several symbols and traditions are associated with Remembrance Day in Canada:

The Red Poppy: Inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields" by Canadian soldier Dr. John McCrae, the red poppy has become the most recognizable symbol of Remembrance Day.



POPPIES: Canadians wear these poppies in the weeks leading up to November 11th.

Two Minutes of Silence at 11:00 am on November 11th: Canadians observe two minutes of silence to honor the fallen.

National Ceremony: A formal ceremony is held at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, attended by the Governor General, Prime Minister, and other dignitaries.

The Last Post and Reveille: Bugle calls are played during ceremonies, symbolizing the duty of the dead and the call to return to duty for the living.

Recitation of "In Flanders Fields": This poem is often recited during Remembrance Day ceremonies

Evolving Significance

While Remembrance Day initially focused on World War I veterans, its scope has expanded over the years to include those who served in World War II, the Korean War, peacekeeping missions, and more recent conflicts like Afghanistan and the Middle East.

This evolution reflects Canada's ongoing military commitments and the changing nature of global conflicts.

Educational Importance

Remembrance Day plays a crucial role in educating younger generations about Canada's military history and the sacrifices made by previous generations. Schools often hold special assemblies, and many communities organize events to engage youth in the act of remembrance

Personal Reflection

For many Canadians, Remembrance Day is a deeply personal occasion. It may involve remembering family members who served, visiting war memorials, or simply taking time to reflect on the freedoms they enjoy because of others' sacrifices

Challenges and Controversies

While widely respected, Remembrance Day is not without its challenges. *Balancing Remembrance and Glorification:* There's an ongoing discussion about how to honor military service without glorifying war itself

Inclusivity: Efforts are being made to ensure that the contributions of Indigenous soldiers, women, and other historically marginalized groups are adequately recognized.

Relevance to Younger Generations: As the number of World War II veterans dwindles, there's a challenge in keeping the day relevant to younger Canadians who may not have personal connections to these conflicts.

International Context

While Remembrance Day is distinctly Canadian in its observance, it's part of a broader international tradition. Many Commonwealth countries observe similar commemorations on November 11th, while others, like New Zealand and Australia, have their own dates of remembrance



Conclusion

Remembrance Day is more than just a day of commemoration in Canada; it's a

solemn occasion that speaks to the heart of Canadian values and identity. By taking time each year to remember and honor those who have served, Canadians reaffirm their commitment to peace, freedom, and democracy. The act of commemoration on Remembrance Day is multifaceted. It involves not just remembering the past, but also reflecting on the present and considering the future. It's about honoring sacrifice, understanding the costs of war, and recommitting to the ideals of peace and freedom. For Canadians, to commemorate Remembrance Day means to pause and reflect, to wear a poppy with pride and understanding, to participate in ceremonies or moments of silence, and to pass on the stories and lessons of the past to future generations. It's an act of *national unity*, a *moment of personal reflection*, and a *commitment to never forget the sacrifices* that have shaped the nation. In an ever-changing world, Remembrance Day remains a constant, reminding Canadians of their shared history and the ongoing responsibility to work towards a peaceful future. It's a day that connects past, present, and future, ensuring that the phrase "Lest we forget" continues to resonate with meaning for all Canadians.

POLITICAL Desk:

News from councillors, elected reps and community associations



Political commentary:

Each month we invite elected officials from our region to submit messages to this newsletter. Our aim is to give these elected officials the opportunity of updating their constituents with news from their constituency.

Published responses which we have received demonstrates the interest and support these elected officials have for such local initiatives as this newsletter.

We wish the Pickering Council, the Ratepayer associations and elected representatives a safe and happy November.

From the PICKERING City Council



Profile
mayor@pickering.ca

Councillor Maurice Brenner
Regional Councillor Ward 1



Profile
mbrenner@pickering.ca

Councillor Linda Cook
Regional Councillor Ward 2



Profile
lcook@pickering.ca

Councillor David Pickles
Regional Councillor Ward 3



Profile
dpickles@pickering.ca

Councillor Lisa Robinson
City Councillor Ward 1



Profile
lrobinson@pickering.ca

Councillor Mara Nagy
City Councillor Ward 2



Profile
mnagy@pickering.ca

Councillor Shaheen Butt
City Councillor Ward 3



Profile
shbutt@pickering.ca



From Councillor Robinson...

On this Remembrance Day, we honor the brave men and women who have served our country with courage and dedication, as well as those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Their selflessness, valor, and unwavering commitment have shaped the nation we live in today, a place where liberty and democracy thrive. As we pause to reflect, let us never forget the cost of the freedoms we enjoy, and may we always stand in gratitude for those who have fought and fallen in defense of our country. We owe them a debt we can never fully repay. **Lest we forget.** November, 2024



Paul White
President



Peggy Bowie
President
(Ph 416.903.3284)

PWSCA

Pickering West Shore Community Association

Scott Loyst
President

An open letter to the CBC:



The two national broadcasting networks, CBC and CTV, do not have reporters wearing poppies. Pursuing this, the national Royal Legion explained that wear a poppy is personal. Maybe the networks have a schedule, namely Nov. 1st.

The BBC reporters all wear poppies. This is not a personal issue for national broadcasters.

I sent the CBC ombudsman, Jack Nagler, the letter below. A couple of days ago, he responded to my phone call that he would pass on the message to the Editor in Chief of the news team. Nothing! Every person on CBC news and CTV news is 'poppyless.' This is far from being a personal issue...it is a matter of being a respectful Canadian but perhaps being such is not the CBC or CTV regard as having importance to the news...the *national* news.

CBC Ombudsman, Jack Nagler
CBC Canada

“Hello Mr. Nagler,

Again I plead with you...RE: wearing of poppies.

The BBC news reporters are wearing poppies; all MPs are wearing poppies; all MPPs are wearing poppies; every politician, municipal, provincial and national is wearing a poppy. All these people are honouring the fallen of the past wars.

It is an absolute SHAME, our national broadcasting network, does not have one single reporter or news anchor paying respect to Canadian veterans on Remembrance Day. This is amazingly SHAMEFUL.

To say I am more than ashamed at the failure of our national broadcasting network to remember is putting it mildly. I am disgusted that the network has failed to honour our veterans, pay respect by adhering to practiced traditions in the country. You can be sure, I will publish and talk about this shameful omission by the CBC every opportunity I get.

I am proud to be a Canadian, ashamed that CBC is our national news network.

CC: Jennifer O'Connell, Member of Parliament
Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance, Queen's Park
Mayor Kevin Ashe, City of Pickering
President, Mike McFarlane, Canadian Legion, Br. 606
Treasury Exec, Helen Wishnowski, Canadian Legion, Br. 606”

Ombudsman Nagler responded:

“Dear Mr. Szpin,

I am sharing your email with Mr. Fenlon as a supplement to your earlier complaint.

I should note that a few years ago, when I was working for CBC News, it was generally the practice for on-air journalists to begin wearing poppies on November 1. So you may wish to see how things look over the weekend before drawing too many conclusions.

Sincerely,

Jack Nagler

CBC Ombudsman

ombud@cbc.ca

www.cbc.ca/ombudsman”

Richard's Desk

Briefly:

- Town of Uxbridge wears its patriotic colours on its sleeves, streets. Kudos to Mayor Dave Barton



Kudos to Uxbridge, Town and Region

On a recent Sunday drive, I had the good fortune of stopping in Uxbridge, ON. What a wonderful surprise!

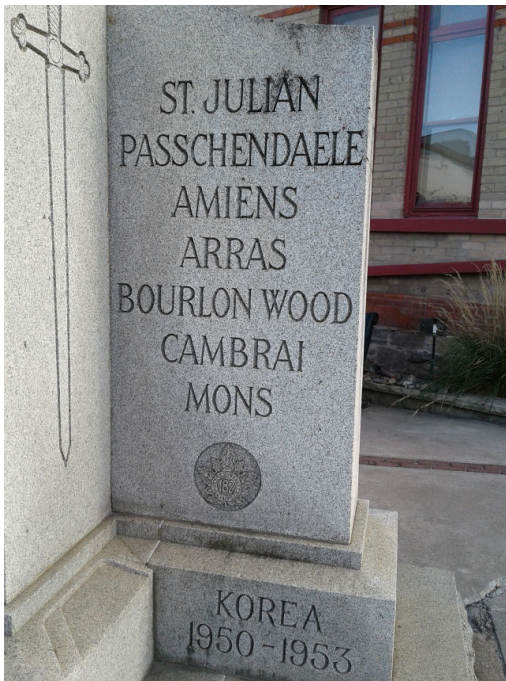
Uxbridge is a quaint, welcoming town northeast of Toronto, in Durham region. Uxbridge has a surprise for pedestrians visiting its downtown. Dedications and commemorations in honour of Canadian armed forces veterans, erected everywhere: intersection sculptures, street side plaques, street lamp flags and park side memorials. The biggest surprise was the streetlight banner memorials:



Every street post throughout most of the region has these banners with a photo, dedicated to a war veteran. What an incredible sight and awesome commemoration by Uxbridge and its residents.

The Mayor, Dave Barton, the department responsible for this commemorative endeavour and all the contributing residents and friends of Uxbridge are to be commended to this civic commemoration. It is an honorable and memorable endeavour that every visitor to Uxbridge and its region will appreciate.

Kudos to **Mayor Dave Barton** and all the people involved with this wonderful example of citizens appreciating their fellow citizens, particularly, fellow citizens who have served in Canada's armed forces.







Mayor Kevin Ashe, City of Pickering, deserves kudos and acknowledge for his

City's commemoration and remembrance events.

The City of Pickering installed a unique art display in its Esplanade Park, art developed and created by Canadian artist, Linfeng Zhou and a very fitting tribute to the fallen veterans.



Pickering also has its own set of street lamp banners, more than 200, all designed by the local Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 606.

Fermo's Desk



Briefly

- Dogs have been used in wars since ancient times. Today their use has decreased as technology is improved and reduces the need of this courageous canines.

Dogs have a very long history in warfare, starting in ancient times. From being trained in combat, to their use as scouts, sentries, messengers, mercy dogs, and trackers, their uses have been varied and some continue to exist in modern military usage.

Dogs were used in war by the Egyptians, Greeks, Persians, Slavs, Britons, and Romans.

Most often dogs were used as sentries or patrols, though they were sometimes taken into battle.

Frederick the Great of Prussia used dogs as messengers during the Seven Years' War with Russia. Napoleon used dogs to guard naval installations in France.

The U.S. used dogs in the American Civil War to protect, send messages, and guard prisoners. Dogs were also used as mascots in American WWI propaganda and recruiting posters.

Dogs, fearless combatants in war, were used in warfare by many civilizations. They were used in attacks to break up enemy ranks, as sentries and guards and as tracker assistants.

Different breeds were used for different tasks, but always met the demands of the handlers. Many roles for dogs in war are obsolete and no longer practiced, but the concept of the war dog still remains alive and well in modern warfare.

In ancient times, dogs, often large mastiff-type breeds, would be strapped with armour or spiked collars and sent into battle to attack the enemy. This strategy was used by various civilizations, such as the Romans and the Greeks. While not as common as in previous centuries, modern militaries continue to employ dogs in an attack role. SOCOM forces of the US military still use dogs in raids for apprehending fleeing enemies or prisoners, or for searching areas too difficult or dangerous for human soldiers (such as crawl spaces).

About the time World War I broke out, many European communities used dogs to pull small carts for milk deliveries and similar purposes. Several European armies adapted the process for military use. In August 1914, the Belgian Army used dogs to pull their Maxim guns on wheeled carriages and supplies or reportedly even wounded in their carts. *Dogs proved hardier and more suitable for military use under fire than pack horses.* Officially withdrawn from military use in December 1916, dogs were still used for several months more and needed before horse-drawn carts and motor vehicles fully replaced them.

Dogs were often used to carry messages in battle. They were turned loose to move silently to a second handler. This required a dog that was very loyal to *two* masters. Some messenger dogs also performed other communication jobs, such as pulling telephone lines or cables from one location to another.

In World War II, dogs took on a new role in medical experimentation, as the primary animals chosen for medical research. The animal experimentation allowed doctors to test new medicines without risking human lives, though these practices came under more scrutiny after the war. The United States' government responded by proclaiming these dogs as heroes.

Detection and tracking

Many dogs were used to locate mines.

Dogs have been used to track fugitives and enemy troops, overlapping partly into the duties of a scout dog, but using their olfactory senses to track scents.

Some dogs are trained to locate booby traps and concealed enemies such as snipers. The dog's keen sense of smell and hearing would make them far more effective at detecting these dangers than humans. The best scout dogs are described as having a disposition intermediate to docile tracking dogs and aggressive attack dogs. Scouting dogs are able to identify the opposing threat within 1,000 yards of area, much more efficient than humans.

In Southeast Asia (SEA) bases; captured Vietcong told of the fear and respect that they had for the dogs. The Vietcong even placed a bounty on lives of handlers and dogs.

The success of sentry dogs was determined by the lack of successful penetrations of bases in Vietnam and Thailand. The United States War Dogs Association estimated that war dogs saved over 10,000 U.S. lives in Vietnam.

Contemporary dogs in military roles are also often referred to as police dogs, or in the United States and United Kingdom as a military working dog (MWD), or K-9. Their roles are nearly as varied as those of their ancient relatives, though they tend to be more rarely used in front-line formations. As of 2011, 600 U.S. MWDs were actively participating in the conflicts in Iraq and

Afghanistan.

Traditionally, the most common breed for these police-type operations has been the German Shepherd; in recent years, a shift has been made to smaller dogs with keener senses of smell for detection work, and more resilient breeds such as the Belgian Malinois and Dutch Shepherd for patrolling and law enforcement. All MWDs in use today are paired with a single individual after their training. This person is called a handler. While a handler usually does not stay with one dog for the length of either's career, usually a handler stays partnered with a dog for at least a year, and sometimes much longer. However, the length of the time with the dog and handler is very important. There must be trust between the two for things to work properly and smoothly. The handler must trust the dog's instincts to find a specific scent.

The latest canine tactical vests are outfitted with cameras and microphones that allow dogs to relay audio and visual information to their handlers.

Today, personnel cutbacks have reduced USAF dog teams but many dogs are still used and trained at Lackland Air Force Base in the United States.

As a partner in everyday military police work, dogs have proved to be versatile and loyal . They can chase suspects, track them if they are hidden, and guard them when they are caught. They are trained to respond aggressively if their handler is attacked, and otherwise not to react at all unless they are commanded to do so by their handler. Many police dogs are also trained in detection, as well.

Drug and explosives detection

Both MWDs and their civilian counterparts provide service in drug detection, sniffing out a broad range of psychoactive substances despite efforts at concealment. Provided they have been trained to detect it, MWDs can smell small traces of nearly any substance, even if it is in a sealed container. Dogs trained in drug detection are normally used at ports of embarkation such as airports, checkpoints, and other places where security and a need for anti-contraband measures exist.

MWDs can also be trained to detect explosives. As with narcotics, trained MWDs can detect minuscule amounts of a wide range of explosives, making them useful for searching entry points, patrolling within secure installations, and at checkpoints. These dogs are capable of achieving over a 98% success rate in bomb detection.

Traditionally, as in World War II, US MWDs were returned home after the war, to their former owners or new adoptive ones.

Military working dogs continue to serve as sentries, trackers, search and rescue, scouts, and

mascots. Retired MWDs are often adopted as pets or therapy dogs.

HEALTH:

Briefly:

These are researched articles about coping with grief:

- Relating to PTSD in the military
- Coping with grief
- Grief and loss stages and coping strategies

Grief and physical health outcomes in soldiers returning from combat

Few studies have measured the burden of physical health problems after military deployment, except in association with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI). Grief has been given systematic examination after US deployment in Iran and Afghanistan.

The study results

The most frequent physical health symptoms reported were:

- sleep problems
- musculoskeletal pain
- fatigue
- muscle and back pain

Over 20% of soldiers reported difficulty coping with grief. This difficulty was significantly associated with physical health outcomes and occupational impairment. Clinicians should be aware of the unique role grief plays in post-deployment physical health when treating patients.

In the general population, there is evidence that grief predicts negative health outcomes independently from PTSD and depression, and that direct exposure to trauma worsens grief. Grief has also been linked to poor physical health and functional impairment. A 2010 study of soldiers returning from operations in Iraq found that over 80% "knew someone who had been

seriously injured or killed,” and over one-quarter “had a buddy shot or hit near them”. The impact of losing a team member in combat has been likened to losing a close family member. Although there have been over 6000 service members killed in Iraq or Afghanistan, little research has been conducted on the health consequences of grief in service members during the current wars such as in the Middle East.



Coping with grief

Losing someone you love can change your world. You miss the person who has died and want them back. You may feel sad, alone, or even angry. You might have trouble concentrating or sleeping. If you were a busy caregiver, you might feel lost when you’re suddenly faced with lots of unscheduled time. These feelings are normal. There’s no right or wrong way to mourn. Scientists have been studying how we process grief and are learning more about healthy ways to cope with loss.

Read the detailed article at -> [**GRIEF**](#)

Coping with Grief and Loss: Stages of Grief, the Grieving Process, and Learning to Heal

Grief is a natural response to loss. It’s the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away. Often, the pain of loss can feel overwhelming. You may experience all kinds of difficult and unexpected emotions, from shock or anger to disbelief, guilt, and profound sadness.

The pain of grief can also disrupt your physical health, making it difficult to sleep, eat, or even think straight. These are normal reactions to loss—and the more significant the loss, the more intense your grief will be.

Coping with the loss of someone or something you love is one of life’s biggest challenges. You may associate grieving with bereavement, the death of a loved one — which is often the cause of the most intense type of grief—but any loss can cause grief.

Read the detailed article at -> [**Causes of grief and coping**](#)

Also read the sources of grief at -> [**Sources of Grief**](#)

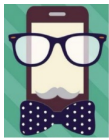
Books Shelf...

Briefly:

- The books listed below are primarily military in theme.



Gail and Heather, two very dynamic and discerning book enthusiasts, both retired school administrators, bring years of experience to the book shelves here. However, as they are pacifists, they eschew reading books about war and combat.



Richard also opposes war, finding it very difficult to accept any rationalizations and justifications for it. However, as a retired teacher of history, he recognizes wars are a fact of life in the world of *international relations*. He does read books related to warfare.

Richard recommends these titles for those interested in war-themed books:

[A SHIELD IN THE SHADOWS, Cheryl Bristow](#)

[The ARMOR OF LIGHT, Ken Follett](#)

[BLITZED, Norman Ohler](#)

[CLAWS OF THE PANDA, Johathan Manthorpe](#)

[HITLER'S STOLEN CHILDREN, Oelhafen, Tate](#)

[SIR JOHN JAMES TAYLOR - DE FACTO RULER OF IRELAND, Richard R. Pyves](#)

Travel...

Briefly:

- No matter how you cut it, travel is becoming very expensive. Vacation travel

within Canada may cost less but it is still costly.

You might consider a vacation with a tour company like **CanXplore**. There are many benefits and perks to such a vacation: they take care of the travel details, accommodation is first class and pre-arranged, and they have the experience to fully maximize your travel holiday.

It is an excellent way to get the biggest bang for your travel buck and **CanXplore** has the expertise, the experience and the knowledge to give you not only a trip you will remember for a life time, but because they specialize in Canadian tours, it will be a trip that will not break your travel budget.



CanXplore is a tour operating company in the Durham region. We specialize in escorted tours for the ‘*young-at-heart*.’ Our accommodation in Newfoundland is in best of class hotels in each area we travel.

Newfoundland Tour, 2025, July 5-14 [Booking starts in Sept]
(Waiting list signing being accepted)

Our outstandingly popular Newfoundland tour is being booked now. This tour has received dozens of “5 star” reviews. Here are some of what our previous clients have said...

Cathy was so much fun and the small group was perfect. I will book again soon!! Very professional driver as well.

Karen A.

This coach tour brings Newfoundland alive. From west to east: Western Brook Pond, “Anchors Away” entertainment, to Gander- feels great to be associated with these people, to the eastern tip

of Canada, and boat touring seeing icebergs, puffins and whales. Get screeched in to become an Honorary Newfoundlander. This tour brings it all together with smiles, tears and pride to have been part of NFLD for a short while!

W.B.W.

This trip to Newfoundland was beyond amazing in so many ways.

Cathy created a diverse, interesting, and creative itinerary, encompassing the many aspects of Newfoundland. The geography of the area was an experience: tours of the Tablelands (i.e. the earth's mantle), a boat tour through the amazing fiords, Bonne Bay which showed us the other side of Gros Morne, all expertly explained by very knowledgeable guides. A bonus on our boat trips was being entertained Newfoundland style on our ride back to the docks.

We were fortunate to see icebergs, whales, and puffins on our other boat tours.

Newfoundland history was presented with tours of Trinity, Bonavista, where we saw a replica of Giovanni Caboto's ship, Signal Hill, and more.

And the fun stuff!!! Wine and beer tastings, our own kitchen party at one of the hotels, Anchors Away Show, and of course getting Screeched!!

Cathy's attention to detail was exceptional, making sure everyone's needs were met. Garfield, our bus driver, was a delight, going above and beyond.

I highly recommend CanXplore,
Mary Ann M.

What a fantastic 10 days in NFLD with a great group of people! The entire trip was very well planned out. Every day was packed with great sites, excellent food & lots of activities. Cathy did a fantastic job of keeping us well informed and entertained (especially on the bus). Our bus driver (Garfield) being a Newfoundlander, shared many stories from his past & present. He made sure I had my fill of bananas



I would recommend CanXplore for future trips.

Karen M.

Newfoundland has always been on my bucket list...fantastic 10 day bus trip. Cathy you could not have done it better..no complaints

Carolyn N.

For more information information,

Click -> <https://www.canxplore.com/>

Book at www.canxplore.com/newfoundland... Or Email

Cathy: cathy@canxplore.com

Thank you for your support of our military personnel with your generous donations for this Commemorative issue.



We honour these fallen soldiers and service personnel and thank them for their great sacrifices. May they rest in peace.

Thank you everyone for your continued support and generous contributions to my publications. I fully appreciate having your readership and support. Thank you!

Richard

(with assistance from

Nadia and Fermo)