



THE MAROON BERET LE BÉRET MARRON



SEPTEMEBR 2025

www.canadianairborneforces.ca

CAFA PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

IN WITH THE NEW! FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT

COL (RET'D) Rick Hatton

By the time you are reading this, CAFA has a new President. I have thoroughly enjoyed six years as CAFA President and together we have accomplished a lot -- but it is time for a new team to take us forward. At our Annual General Meeting in May, members elected Bruce Ewing as President, Jim Holsworth Vice President and Eric Richard, Adam de Bartok, Tony DeJacolyn and Roger Chabot as Directors on our Board. Additionally, at a recent September meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board provisionally elected Jim Davis, Gary Yuzichuk, Ray Joseph, Greg Jensen and Robbie Robinson as additional Directors, subject to approval at our next Annual General Meeting which will likely be held in May 2026 at CFB Trenton. Congratulations to all of them and thanks to Mike Houghton, Clay Samis, Jay Lapeyre and Mel Douglas who have stepped back from the Board after many years of loyal and constructive service.

CAFA remains in excellent hands with a refreshed, experienced, vigorous, and capable Executive and Board of Directors full of enthusiasm, energy and great ideas that will take CAFA to new heights. You will hear from Bruce and in articles further in this issue about some exciting initiatives under way or contemplated. Thanks to Scott Moody and his Communications team for this newest excellent issue of The Maroon Beret. Happy Landings to all!



**Photo: New CAFA President Col Ret'd Bruce Ewing and
CAFA Immediate Past- President Col Ret'd Rick Hatton**

PLACE AU RENOUVEAU ! MESSAGE DU PRÉSIDENT SORTANT

COL (RET'D) Rick Hatton

Au moment où vous lirez ces lignes, l'ACFA a un nouveau président. J'ai énormément apprécié mes six années en tant que président de l'ACFA, et ensemble nous avons accompli beaucoup de choses – mais il est maintenant temps pour une nouvelle équipe de nous faire avancer. Lors de notre assemblée générale annuelle en mai, les membres ont élu Bruce Ewing au poste de président, Jim Holsworth vice-président, ainsi que Eric Richard, Adam de Bartok, Tony DeJacolyn et Roger Chabot en tant qu'administrateurs de notre conseil d'administration.

De plus, lors d'une récente réunion du conseil d'administration en septembre, le conseil a provisoirement élu Jim Davis, Gary Yuzichuk, Ray Joseph, Greg Jensen et Robbie Robinson comme administrateurs supplémentaires, sous réserve de leur approbation lors de notre prochaine assemblée générale annuelle, qui aura probablement lieu en

mai 2026 à la BFC Trenton. Félicitations à eux tous, et un grand merci à Mike Houghton, Clay Samis, Jay Lapeyre et Mel Douglas, qui se sont retirés du conseil après de nombreuses années de service loyal et constructif.

L'ACFA demeure entre d'excellentes mains, avec un exécutif et un conseil d'administration renouvelés, expérimentés, dynamiques et compétents, débordant d'enthousiasme, d'énergie et de grandes idées qui porteront l'ACFA vers de nouveaux sommets. Vous entendrez parler de Bruce et découvrirez, dans les articles plus loin dans ce numéro, certaines initiatives passionnantes déjà en cours ou envisagées. Merci à Scott Moody et à son équipe des communications pour ce tout nouveau numéro remarquable de The Maroon Beret. Bon atterrissage à tous !

New CAFA President's Message

Col (Retd) Bruce Ewing

I will start by saying how honoured I am to have been elected as the new President of CAFA. I know I have big boots to fill and I aim to do so.

Thanks to Rick Hatton for steering CAFA for the past 6 years. I am taking over an organization that is sound and with 9 recently appointed new members on the Board of Directors, we have plenty of talent and energy to get things done. These new members are a very diverse group including: several former NCMs; a few who are still serving CAF members; several francophones; and many members from different branches other than just infantry - all of which provides a great cross-section of jumpers to help make our organization better.

We have several new initiatives that I am sure you will appreciate. Last spring we implemented a

cafakitshop.com



HOODIE W/PECASUS



HOODIE W/WINGS & "AIRBORNE PARATROOPER"

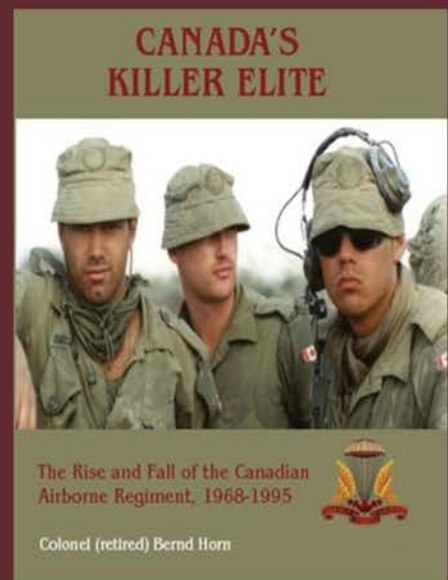


CYPRUS 68TH HOODIE (LOGO IN WHITE)

History Programme which has already included substantial Airborne items on our website for your reading pleasure. We have also already commenced the planning of a Battlefield Study to Europe for May 2027 tracing the footsteps of 1 Can Para Bn (more to follow on that in the near future.) And just this month we decided to examine a follow-up of the First Special Service Force (FSSF) and its outstanding feats of soldiering in Italy during the Second World War. And more Battlefield Studies are being considered, including some shorter, less expensive ones closer to home. We are also looking to help re-invigorate the various Airborne displays and archives in the Base Petawawa Museum with a view to potentially have some displays temporarily moved around some of the various locations in Canada.

We have also just initiated a Fund Raising Committee with the aim of improving our financial situation so that we can do more such as what outlined above with the History Programme, but also potentially, if successful enough, either reduce or get rid of membership fees completely. While this might take us a few years, and might not come to fruition, that is our aim.

Canada's Killer Elite



“Canada’s Killer Elite: The Rise and Fall of the Canadian Airborne Regiment.” CAFA has been able to arrange to receive 200 pre-release copies of that will be sold during events at the discounted rate.

Books are also available online: [Link](#)

There are other initiatives we are working on which will be announced over the next several months to include a focused campaign to try to convince the military and civilian leadership to increase, improve and make better use overall of Airborne capabilities as Canada substantially increases its defence spending over the next several years. There is a definite role for Airborne capabilities - now is the time to take action.

Finally, in case anyone cares about my background, I was a member of The Royal Canadian Regiment having retired in 2017 with 39 years of service. I completed my BPara course in May 1982 and my Freefall / Static Line Square Course in 2004. My specific Airborne service includes 3 years in the Canadian Airborne Regiment from 1991-1994 and 3 years as the Commanding Officer of the Canadian Parachute Centre (CPC) / Canadian Forces Advanced Warfare Centre (CFLAWC) (now the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre (CAAWC)) from 2004-2007. Most importantly, my sons are both military parachutists too.

I just want to close reminding everyone that CAFA is for all Military Jumpers, not just those who served in the Canadian Airborne Regiment or the Jump Companies of the LIBs / QOR. It is a Brotherhood of Jumpers. If you know a Jumper who is not yet a member, let them know that they should join. And if you have not looked at our website lately, you should, <https://www.canadianairborneforces.ca/> and share it with your Jumper friends. Our aim is to make it the go-to place for everything Airborne. You can help us do that by sharing content that might be of interest to other Jumpers.

Message du Nouveau Président Col (Retd) Bruce Ewing

Je commencerai par dire à quel point je suis honoré d'avoir été élu nouveau président de l'ACFA. Je sais que j'ai de grandes chaussures à chausser, et je compte bien être à la hauteur.

Un grand merci à Rick Hatton d'avoir dirigé l'ACFA au cours des six dernières années. Je prends la tête d'une organisation solide et, avec les neuf nouveaux membres récemment nommés au conseil d'administration, nous disposons de tout le talent et de toute l'énergie nécessaires pour aller de l'avant. Ces nouveaux membres forment un groupe très diversifié : plusieurs anciens MR (militaires du rang),

quelques membres encore actifs des FAC, et plusieurs francophones, et de nombreux représentants d'armes autres que l'infanterie. Cette diversité offre un excellent éventail de parachutistes pour aider à améliorer notre organisation.



Photo: Col (ret'd) Bruce Ewing and his son Captain Riley Ewing jumped together in August 2025. Bruce did a tandem while Riley was finishing his SLSQ course

Nous avons également lancé plusieurs nouvelles initiatives que, j'en suis sûr, vous apprécierez. Le printemps dernier, nous avons mis en place un programme d'histoire, qui inclut déjà de nombreux articles sur l'aéroporté sur notre site Web pour votre plaisir de lecture. Nous avons aussi commencé la planification d'une étude de champ de bataille en Europe pour mai 2027, retraçant les pas du 1er Bataillon de parachutistes canadiens — plus d'informations à venir bientôt. Ce mois-ci, nous avons décidé d'examiner une étude de suivi sur la Première Force de Service Spéciale (FSSF) et ses exploits exceptionnels en Italie pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. D'autres études de champs de bataille sont également envisagées, dont certaines plus courtes, moins coûteuses et plus proches de chez nous. Nous cherchons également à redynamiser les expositions et archives aéroportées au musée de la base de Petawawa, avec la possibilité de déplac temporairement certaines expositions dans différentes régions du Canada.

Nous venons aussi de créer un comité de collecte de fonds dans le but d'améliorer notre situation financière afin de pouvoir faire davantage — comme ce qui a été mentionné ci-dessus avec le programme d'histoire — mais aussi, si nous réussissons suffisamment bien, réduire ou même éliminer complètement les frais d'adhésion. Cela pourrait prendre quelques années et ne pas se concrétiser, mais c'est notre objectif.

D'autres initiatives sont en cours et seront annoncées dans les prochains mois. Parmi elles, une campagne ciblée visant à convaincre les dirigeants militaires et civils d'accroître, d'améliorer et d'utiliser plus efficacement les capacités aéroportées, alors que le Canada augmentera considérablement ses dépenses de défense au cours des prochaines années. Les capacités aéroportées ont assurément un rôle à jouer — le moment est venu d'agir.

Enfin, pour ceux qui s'intéressent à mon parcours, j'ai été membre du Royal Canadian Regiment, dont je suis parti à la retraite en 2017 après 39 ans de service. J'ai terminé mon cours BPara en mai 1982 et mon cours de chute libre / ouverture automatique voilure carrée en 2004. Mon service aéroporté comprend 3 années au Régiment aéroporté canadien (1991-1994) et 3 années comme commandant du Centre de parachutisme canadien (CPC) / Centre d'instruction avancée des Forces canadiennes (CFLAWC) (aujourd'hui Centre d'instruction avancée de l'Armée canadienne (CAAWC)) de 2004 à 2007. Et, surtout, mes deux fils sont eux aussi parachutistes militaires.

Je tiens à conclure en rappelant que l'ACFA s'adresse à tous les parachutistes militaires, pas seulement à ceux qui ont servi au Régiment aéroporté canadien ou dans les compagnies de saut des BIL/ QOR. C'est une fraternité de parachutistes. Si vous connaissez un parachutiste qui n'est pas encore membre, dites-lui qu'il devrait nous rejoindre, et si vous n'avez pas consulté notre site Web récemment, vous devriez le faire : [Body](#) — et le partager avec vos camarades parachutistes. Notre objectif est d'en faire la référence incontournable pour tout ce qui concerne l'aéroporté. Vous pouvez nous aider à atteindre cet objectif en partageant des contenus susceptibles d'intéresser d'autres parachutistes.

The 2024 Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) Soldier of the Year is MCpl Dylan Caron

During the past year MCpl Caron's influence within the francophone Airborne Community has been strengthened through his numerous accomplishments. He was instrumental in the conversion training to the MC6 Canopy with CSOR.



Photo: MCpl Caron Airborne Soldier of the Year
His determination and leadership during the 2024 Annual Competition (USA) showcased the Canadian Airborne culture and reinforced the exchange of Airborne knowledge and training with other nations. He earned his Jumpmaster qualification in October thereby enhancing unit capabilities.



Photo: MCpl Caron receiving his Airborne Soldier of the Year Award

His personal leadership and skill have had a direct and tangible impact on the units performance and morale, strengthening teamwork and cohesion, ensuring operational readiness.

L'Association des Forces aéroportées canadiennes (CAFA) décerne le titre de Soldat de l'année au Cplc Dylan Caron, du 3e Bataillon du Royal 22e Régiment (R22eR).

Au cours de la dernière année, l'influence du Cplc Caron au sein de la communauté aéroportée francophone s'est renforcée grâce à ses nombreuses réalisations. Il a joué un rôle déterminant dans la formation de conversion au parachute MC6 avec le CSOR.



Photo: Immediate past president Col (Ret'd) Rick Hatton, MCpl Caron and Secretary Mike English.

Sa détermination et son leadership lors de la compétition annuelle de 2024 (États-Unis) ont mis en valeur la culture aéroportée canadienne et favorisé l'échange de connaissances et de formations aéroportées avec d'autres nations. Il a obtenu sa qualification de chef largeur en octobre, améliorant ainsi les capacités de son unité.

Son leadership personnel et ses compétences ont eu un impact direct et concret sur la performance et le moral de l'unité, renforçant l'esprit d'équipe et la cohésion, et assurant la préparation opérationnelle. Le Caporal-chef Dylan Caron incarne parfaitement les valeurs et l'esprit des Forces aéroportées canadiennes.

The 2025 Canadian Airborne Forces Association Scholarship Scholarship Chair Perry Mataxas

Ellen Mary Wilbur, the daughter of Percy Edward Wilbur, a former Airborne Engineer, has been awarded with the Canadian Airborne Forces Association Scholarship, recognized as the most deserving candidate for 2025. Her remarkable academic success in high school, her distinguished personal traits including proven leadership, and her active participation in a range of sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities, made her the top candidate for 2025.



Photo: CWO (ret'd) John Marr, Ellen Wilbur, and Percy Wilbur (her father)

Ellen has successfully gained admission to Queen's University for this autumn, where she will be studying for a Bachelor of Commerce degree at the Smith School of Business. Her sister Claire was awarded the CAFA Scholarship in 2021. The Wilburs (Percy and Catherine), have raised two daughters who are not only academically accomplished but also have engaged in a range of community activities through volunteering.

The \$3000 Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) scholarship applicants include current members of CAFA; spouses, children or grandchildren of current CAFA members (either living or deceased); members in good standing of a Cadet Corps that is affiliated with CAFA; or any current Army Cadet who is a qualified Canadian Forces Parachutist. More info: www.canadianairborneforces.ca/scholarship

CAFA AGM 23-25 MAY 2025

The Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) conducted its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and associated events 23-25 May at the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre at CFB Trenton.

The weekend kicked off with a Meet & Greet social event at the Earl of Bessborough all-ranks pub on Friday 23 May. The AGM meeting conducted on the morning of 24 May was very productive, including reports regarding a number of important issues including the highly successful Cyprus 2024 Commemoration pilgrimage event conducted in November, Roger Chabot's recent Bravery in Arms (BIA) documentary "Path to Total Victory" in the Netherlands and CAFA plans to embark on an extensive Airborne Historical Project that is likely to include, in years to come, the conduct of Airborne-themed battlefield tours in Europe.



Photo: 2025 CAFA AGM Attendees with CAAWC CO and LCol J. Gavereau and RSM CWO G. Whan.

The Airborne History Project is destined to be CAFA's "Next Big Thing" so watch this space for more details! Members acknowledged the recent passing of CAFA Directors Angelo Diliberti and Alain Saint-Yves, thanked four Directors who were stepping back after decades of loyal service on the Board -- namely Mike Houghton, Clay Samis, Jay Lapeyre and Mel Douglas,

We elected Bruce Ewing to replace Rick Hatton as CAFA President effective 17 September 2025, elected Jim Holsworth as Vice President, elected four new Directors to serve on the CAFA Board of Directors (LCol Eric Richard, Capt Adam de Bartok, Tony DeJacolyn and Roger Chabot) and the President appointed Perry Metaxas to assume

responsibility for the Airborne Forces Scholarship and Dan Clarke as CAFA rep to the National Council of Veterans Associations (NCVA). So CAFA continues in very good hands!



Photo: War Artist Roger Chabot presents LCol J. Gavereau, CO of CAAWC with a copy of his painting "Under Canopy"

On Saturday evening AGM participants and spouses gathered for an enjoyable dinner at a local restaurant in Trenton and the weekend events concluded with a solemn Memorial Service on Sunday morning. The timing of the weekend allowed some members to attend the CAAWC Mess Dinner on Thursday 22 May and the memorial service for Sgt Joe Hillier (RIP) who was a long-time para instructor. The President Rick Hatton and CAFA Secretary Mike English were able to personally congratulate Cplc Caron, Para Coy 3 R22eR (who happened to be attending a course at the CAAWC) on being selected CAFA's Airborne Soldier of the Year.



Join CAFA

CAFA is growing! As a military jumper, you are eligible for membership in the Canadian Airborne Forces Association to join click: [Join](#)

From D-Day to Victory in Europe, 80 Years Ago

By Colonel (Retd) James Holsworth

The 80th anniversary of the end of the 2nd World War in Europe was marked by commemorations in The Netherlands and across Canada. On June 6th, over 200 Veterans, families, friends and soldiers gathered at the 1st Can Para Bn Memorial at Ex Coelis Mountain, Siffleur Falls, to remember those brave souls who stormed Normandy and liberated Europe.

On June 5th, Sgt Mike Garner & MCpl Elishah Jordan, 3 PPCLI, along with several family members, carried the ashes of 13 comrades-in-arms atop Normandy Peak, to join the 'Guardians of the Mountain'.



Photo: Col (Retd) James Holsworth and Col (Retd) Bill Fletcher

Master of Ceremony Col (Retd) Bill Fletcher, Parade Commander Sgt (Retd) Ron Hamilton, Padre LCol (Retd) Dave Prouse, Piper MWO (Ret'd) Colin Norris & Bugler Todd Gow presided. Col (Retd) Jim Holsworth paid tribute to Canadians in the 2nd World War, and Capt (Retd) Bill Dickson remembered our fallen with the roll call of 'The Guardians'.

1st Can Para Bn played key roles from D-Day to their race to the Elbe River a year later. They were among the first Allied troops into occupied Europe, the only Canadians in the 'Battle of the Bulge' in the Ardennes, deployed to The Netherlands to jump across the Rhine, and went deeper into Germany than any other Canadian unit. Canadian Paratroopers Save Denmark! Operation Eclipse 1945



Photo: Col (Retd) James Holsworth speaks during the ceremony at Siffleur Falls

Four of the peaks of Ex Coelis Mountain are named for their battle honours: NORMANDY, where 67 Guardians of the Mountain stand vigil, ARDENNES, RHINE and ELBE. A battlefield tour 'In the Footsteps of the 1st Can Para Bn' will honour this legacy in May 2027.

Thanks to the Airborne Social Club, assisted by 3 PPCLI, British Army Training Unit Suffield, Alberta Parks, Legion Branches 236, 271 & 285, Veterans Voices of Canada, SSF Living History, CAFA & Veterans Food Bank Association for faithfully mounting this tribute.

An article on this special ceremony will be in the Maroon Beret. Lest we forget!

CHANGE OF COMMAND at The CANADIAN ARMY ADVANCED WARFARE CENTRE (CAAWC)

On 24 July 2025, presided by Commander Combat Training Centre Colonel Loic Darras, a Change of Command ceremony was conducted between Lieutenant-Colonel Jérémie Gauvreau and Lieutenant-Colonel Jeff Brown.



Photo: LCol J. Gavereau, Col L. Darras and LCol S. Brown signing the change of Command scrolls.

Rick Hatton and Bruce Ewing, outgoing and incoming Presidents respectively of the Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) attended the event as a show of appreciation for the excellent support from LCol Gauvreau for our association and its activities and to welcome LCol Brown in his new command.

Located at 8 Wing CFB Trenton, the CAAWC is the Centre of Excellence for all parachute and aerial delivery training in the CAF and conducts over 20 different courses in several technical domains.

Thanks and best wishes to LCol Gauvreau, who takes up his new position as Deputy Commander of the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group HQ at CFB Borden.

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Photo: Col (ret'd) Bruce Ewing, Col (ret'd) Rick Hatton, LCol S. Brown and LCol J. Gavereau

57th Fallen Jumper Ceremony, May 4th 2025

On a warm sunny Sunday morning, at the Wegner Point Memorial, Garrison Petawawa, a contingent of 2 CMBG HQ & Signal Squadron and 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, mounted a moving ceremony to honour seven paratroopers from their units who were lost on May 8th, 1968. Many from the Garrison and Airborne communities attended. CAFA was represented by Rick Hatton, Bruce Ewing, Mel Douglas, Ross Mackenzie and Jim Holsworth. Veterans who were on that fatal jump, and family members of those who were lost, shared their memories and expressed thanks for this annual gathering.



DAKOTA C-47 CEREMONY

June 6th, 2025

A ceremony was held on June 6th, 2025, the 81st anniversary of D-Day, to rededicate the newly refurbished C-47 Dakota aircraft on display on the grounds of the Garrison Petawawa Military Museum.



Photo: C-47 Dakota redidication with members of 3 RCR and CAFA

The event was conducted by the Garrison Commander Colonel Jason Guiney and was attended by a large contingent from M Coy (Para) of 3 RCR, some members of 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron as well as Rick Hatton, Ian Husk and JP Frederiks representing CAFA. Major Martz provided an informative and stimulating account of the history of that particular aircraft that not only delivered paratroopers on D-Day as well as on Op Market Garden, but also survived throughout WW II as a general workhorse of the air and was transferred to the RCAF after the war for ongoing service, eventually to be decommissioned and placed on display at the military museum at CFB Petawawa.

After many years on display, the aircraft was provided a much needed and appreciated repainting and refurbishment by talented members of 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron. Thanks to 450 Tac Hel Sqn and Garrison Petawawa Military Museum for making all this happen.

This C-47 Dakota aircraft, especially as it is positioned next to the Airborne statue of "Iron Mike" or "In Action" is a fitting tribute to the legacy of Canada's Airborne Legacy.

REMEMBERING AN ICON: THE C47 SKYTRAIN

Colonel (Retd) Bernd Horn

Although the Second World War ended over eighty years ago, the conflict still remains in the consciousness of the world. The war has left a plethora of symbols, relics and reminders of that global struggle. No vestige of that conflict is more iconic, particularly for paratroopers, than the legendary C47 Skytrain aircraft, also known as the "Gooney Bird." It was a reliable, robust aircraft that became the workhorse, if not backbone, of Allied airborne and logistics operations. Throughout the conflict it served in every theatre including North Africa, Europe and the Far East.



Photo: C-47 Dakota dropping paratroopers during WWII

The C47 was based on the civilian DC-3 commercial airliner that entered service in 1935. Its range, reliability and speed revolutionized air travel. Not surprisingly, the military quickly recognized the potential of the DC-3 and modified the aircraft and redesignated it the C47. The militarized version had a strengthened fuselage, reinforced floors and large cargo doors to allow for the carriage of heavy equipment. As such, it could carry 2,700 kg, which could be used to transport 28 fully equipped paratroopers, or 14 stretchers with three medical staff, or cargo. It had a cruising speed of approximately 255 km/h and a range of 2,400 km. More than 10,000 of the versatile twin-engine aircraft were produced during the war.

Significantly, the CFB Petawawa Military Museum, as part of its Canadian Airborne Forces Collection outdoor display, proudly exhibits an original C47 aircraft. The airframe on display is Dakota Serial 42-92664. It served during the Second World War and continued its service well in the post war period. It was delivered to the U.S. Army Air Force on February 11, 1944. It was subsequently handed-over to the British Government on March 7, 1944 and assigned to 233 Squadron (Sqn), Royal Air Force (RAF), on 24 March 1944. RAF 233 Sqn participated in the three major airborne operations in Europe, namely D-Day, Operation Market



Photo: C-47 returning to the UK with wounded from Normandy July 1944.

Garden (Arnhem) and Operation Varsity (assault airborne drop across the Rhine River) and C47 92664 either dropped paratroopers or towed gliders during those operations as every available airframe was used. It is difficult to discern its actual role as no effort was made at the time to log airframe numbers to actual tasks for each of these operations. Dakota 92664 remained with 233 Sqn, stationed at Down Ampney, in Gloucestershire, until April 16, 1946 when it was transferred to the Canadian Government. The RCAF received its first C47 in March 1943 and had a peak of 169 on strength during the war. By 1975, a mere six Dakotas were still in service. The last aircraft were decommissioned from the RCAF in 1989. The opportunity to see the legendary workhorse of airborne operations should not be missed. The CFB Petawawa Military Museum outdoor display allows for a good appreciation of this well-preserved icon. In addition, a myriad of Canadian military vehicles from the Second World War to the turn of the century are also worth seeing.

CAAWC Trenton - 2025 Basic Parachutist

On Friday, July 25th, 2025, 41 Army Cadets completed Basic Parachutist Course Serial 0253 at the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre (CAAWC) located at 8 Wing CFB Trenton.



Photo: Col (ret'd) Rick Hatton presents coins to graduates of Basic Para Course 253

The Reviewing Officer for the graduation parade was LCol J.W. Brown, CO CAAWC, whose training staff presented each proud cadet with his or her jump wings. Rick Hatton and Bruce Ewing, representing the Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA), were on hand to congratulate the cadets and to present each with a Cadet Para coin from CAFA.



Photo: Graduates of Basic Para Course 253

The coins were generously donated by Marlene Schidle in memory of her departed husband Joe Drouin (RIP). This is quite an accomplishment for young people only 16-18 years old!



3rd Battalion The Royal Canadian Regiment - Mike Company Update

By: Lt T.F. Brukner and Maj M. Filiatrault

This year Mike Company (M Coy) of the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment (3 RCR) carried on the longstanding tradition of tactical excellence and outstanding leadership while executing complex training, leading parachute capability development and modernizing the Canadian Airborne identity. Highlights include: Ex PEGASUS HALO, exercising platoon command team battle procedure and enhancing parachute currency; Ex PEGASUS RAIDER, focused on developing M Coy's combat skills in urban environments; and Ex PEGASUS WHIRLWIND, familiarizing the troops with air assault SOPs.



Photo: M Coy Soldiers Holding a Memorial Service for a Fallen Paratrooper on the Last Jump of a Basic Parachutist Course (November 2024)

In addition to this unit-driven training, M Coy soldiers assisted the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre (CAAWC) in testing future parachute systems. M Coy paratroopers trialed several different parachute systems to provide critical feedback to CAF procurement systems to lead the way for future airborne operations. Additionally, M Coy soldiers participated in Op TOYDROP, a multinational parachute operation intended to integrate the various Airborne Forces of partner nations to enhance the overall combat effectiveness of allied armies. Senior NCOs brought back valuable lessons from partner-nations to further develop internal parachute capabilities.

In November 2024, during the Basic Parachutist Course, the company honored a former Airborne Regiment Company Commander by jumping his ashes and spreading them onto Drop Zone Anzio in Petawawa. This powerful ceremony paid homage to a paratrooper who had once led from the front, ensuring his final resting place remained among those who carried forward the Airborne legacy. As the next generation of Paratroopers qualified, they did so with a renewed sense of duty and respect for those who came before them.



Photo: Canadian Parachute Instructors on Op TOYDROP. WO S. Christie (4th from left) and Sgt J. Hillson (4th from Right) representing M Coy

There are also a number of individual achievements worth celebrating. Sgt J. John was awarded the Airborne Soldier of the Year Award for 2024, while Cpl J. Stirret became one of the CAF's youngest Parachute Instructors at 21 years old. Sgt M. Singh was awarded the LGen Vance Award for Leadership in the Rank of Sergeant, then notably, led a section on a short-notice expeditionary mission in support of the ATF on Op GLOBE. In this capacity his team led security for the Canadian Medical Emergency Response Team (CMERT) missions in the Middle East. While in theatre, Sgt Singh organized a remembrance-day ceremony that brought together veterans and service members from across the CAF with ties to the Airborne.

This year has been monumental for M Coy. Our soldiers assisted the development of future Airborne capabilities, continually developed soldiering abilities, made adaptations to the modern battlefield, and upheld the foundation of the Canadian Military Values of being strong, proud, and ready.

Market Garden : The Overlooked Legacy of Canadian Paratroopers

LCol/Lcol Éric Richard

Military historian/ Historien militaire

From September 17 to 25, 1944—81 years ago—the largest airborne operation in military history unfolded: Operation Market Garden. Over 35,000 Allied soldiers (three airborne divisions) were dropped behind enemy lines in German-occupied Netherlands, tasked with capturing key bridges and holding ground until land forces could advance. It was a bold gamble, and a costly one: nearly 18,000 Allied troops were killed, wounded, or captured. Since then, no other airborne operation has matched Market Garden in terms of scale, inter-allied coordination and strategic ambition. PS: Operation Varsity was the largest airborne operation conducted in a single day and in a single geographical area.



KILLED IN ACTION: Lieut. James Lloyd McKenna, 24, a paratrooper ever since he enlisted in 1941, is reported to have been killed in action on the Western Front. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. C. McKenna, of Chandler, Que., a brother, Cornelius, is serving in the R.C. N.V.R. Lieutenant McKenna

Although the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion did not officially take part in this operation, history has often overlooked the presence of many Canadian paratroopers who were attached to British airborne units. These men, skilled and determined, jumped alongside their British comrades into hostile territory, embodying Canada's commitment and courage during this critical phase of the war.

Around 30 Canadian paratroopers lost their lives during Market Garden. Among them was Lieutenant James Lloyd McKenna from Gaspé, Quebec. An officer attached to the British 11th Parachute Battalion; he served as Second-in-Command of the Mortar Platoon. He was killed in action on September 22, 1944, at the age of 26, and now rests at the Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery, alongside his fellow soldiers.

Their sacrifice—often overshadowed by more prominent accounts of the operation—deserves recognition. These Canadian paratroopers fought with valour in one of the most daring episodes of the Second World War. Their memory lives on in the ground they touched, the bridges they sought to secure, and the silent graves that mark their final duty.

Market Garden : L'héritage méconnu des parachutistes canadiens.

Du 17 au 25 septembre 1944, il y a 81 ans, se déroulait l'Opération Market Garden — la plus vaste opération aéroportée de l'histoire militaire. Plus de 35 000 soldats alliés (trois divisions aéroportées) furent largués derrière les lignes ennemies dans les Pays-Bas occupés, avec pour mission de s'emparer de ponts stratégiques et de tenir le terrain jusqu'à l'arrivée des forces terrestres. Ce pari audacieux coûta cher : près de 18 000 soldats alliés furent tués, blessés ou capturés. Depuis, aucune autre opération aéroportée n'a égalé Market Garden en termes d'ampleur, coordination interalliée et ambition stratégique. PS: l'Opération Varsity a été quant à elle, la plus grande opération aéroportée menée en un seul jour et sur un seul secteur géographique.

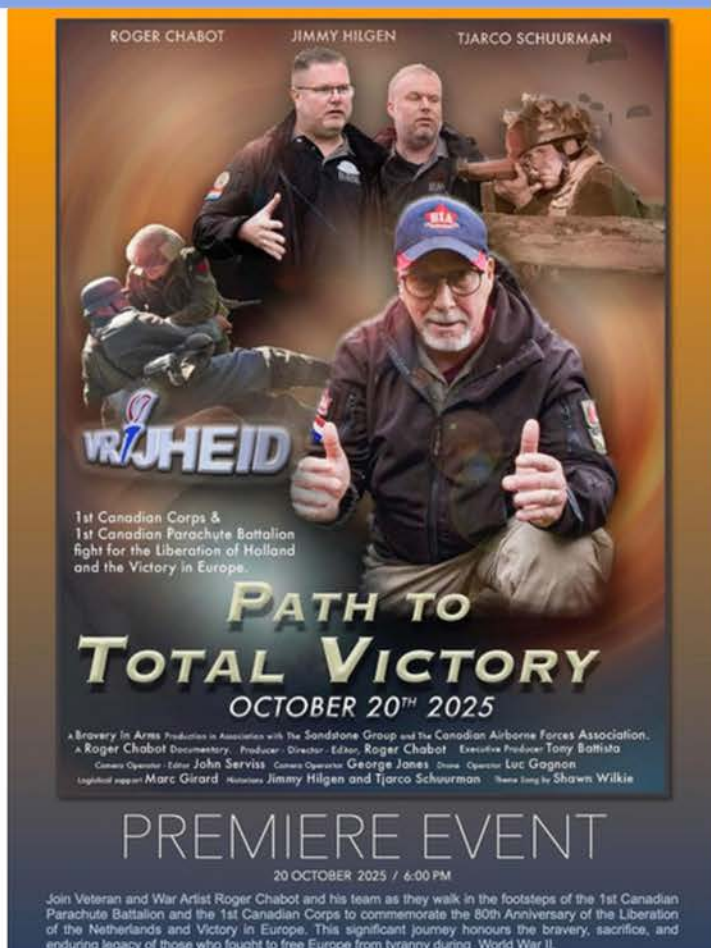
Si le 1er Bataillon de parachutistes canadien ne participa pas officiellement à cette opération, l'histoire a souvent omis de mentionner la présence de nombreux parachutistes canadiens intégrés aux unités britanniques. Ces hommes, volontaires et aguerris, ont sauté aux côtés de leurs camarades britanniques dans un territoire hostile, incarnant l'engagement et le courage du Canada dans cette phase cruciale de la guerre.



Environ 30 parachutistes canadiens perdirent la vie durant Market Garden. Parmi eux, le lieutenant James Lloyd McKenna, originaire de Gaspé, Québec. Officier attaché au 11e Bataillon de parachutistes britannique, il occupait le poste de commandant adjoint de la section mortiers. Il fut tué au combat le 22 septembre 1944, à l'âge de 26 ans. Il repose aujourd'hui au cimetière militaire d'Arnhem Oosterbeek, aux côtés de ses frères d'armes.

Leur sacrifice, souvent éclipsé par les récits plus connus de cette opération, mérite d'être honoré. Ces soldats canadiens ont combattu avec bravoure dans l'un des épisodes les plus risqués de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Leur mémoire vit dans les terres qu'ils ont foulées, les ponts qu'ils ont tenté de sécuriser, et les tombes silencieuses qui rappellent leur ultime devoir.

Airborne!



Path to Total Victory Premier! October 20th, 2025 in Ottawa

“Path to Total Victory” was produced to commemorate the Canadian contribution to the 80th Anniversary of the Victory in Europe and the Liberation of the Netherlands . The film focuses on the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion during Operation Varsity, the 1st Canadian Infantry Division during Operation CannonsHOT and the 5th Canadian Armoured Division during Operation Cleanser.

The premier of Path to Total Victory will be on October 20th at 18:00hrs at the Wellington Building in Ottawa, 197 Sparks Street.

To attend, RSVP to Marc Girard. marc129@rogers.com by October 15th, 2025. With a max attendance of 150 spots are going fast. Attendees must present Photo ID to enter the building. Dress Smart Casual. (no medals).

The Premiere is a free event but donations are welcome to help cover cost of the room, reception and traveling expenses of the volunteers who worked in the production by contributing their time, talents and resources. Donations can be made at www.braveryinarms.ca/pathtotalvictory or by email transfer at roger@chabotwarart.com

New Website Feature Airborne History

The CAFA History Committee has created a history section on website that includes Canadian and international airborne articles and publications. In addition, a list of Canadian Airborne monuments found in Canada and Europe has also been added. This information can be found on the website in the dropdown menu under History.

Join CAFA

CAFA is growing! As a military jumper, you are eligible for membership in the Canadian Airborne Forces Association to join click: [Join](#)

1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Field Study

14-23 May 2027

The Canadian Airborne Forces Association, acting as the patron, in association with Fields of Fire and Merit Travel, is preparing a 1 Canadian Parachute Battalion pilgrimage to Europe from 14-23 May 2027.

The highlights are:

- Visit important Airborne battlefields in Normandy, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany
- Visit the D-Day beaches
- Visit Fortress Eben Emael, Arnhem and La Gleize
- Visit monuments, museums, and Commonwealth War Cemeteries
- Led by experienced military historians and veterans

The Committee is beginning the process of gathering a list of those interested. Especially email addresses. To assist in gathering this information the Committee will launch a Survey on 6 Oct 25.

The link to the survey will appear on the CAFA Facebook Group page on 6 Oct 25.

We realize that not all Airborne, serving or retired, are on Facebook. So, if you are on Facebook we encourage you to copy the Survey link and email it to those you know could be interested. (Including this announcement.) When you have completed the Survey, you should receive a confirmation email within a week.

Future announcements will be published to both the CAFA Facebook Group, and personal email addresses.

This is step one of a long and steady process. The Committee has some experience in the process: Fields of Fire and Merit Travel have done this sort of thing many times. The Committee organized and executed the successful tour: Cyprus2024. Once we have your email address, I will publish mine via email. Posting it on Facebook is not a cool idea.

Daily Detail of the TOUR: [Link](#)

Short history of The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion: [Link](#)



In the Steps of 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion *Sur les traces du 1er Bataillon canadien de Parachutistes*



WHY: Study the legacy of 1st Can Para Bn

WHEN: 10 days, 14 to 23 May 2027

WHO: Airborne soldiers, veterans and families

WHERE: Normandy, Ardennes, The Netherlands

WHAT: Guided tours, talks, museums, remembrance

HOW: historical talks, photos, exhibits, archives

COST: \$4K land package + airfare

INTERESTED? Updates to follow: [Home](#) | [CAFA](#) | [CAFA](#) | [FB](#)

DONATIONS: For general expenses [CAFA/Charity](#)

POURQUOI: Étudier l'héritage du 1er Bon can Para

QUAND: 10 jours, 14 à 23 mai 2027

QUI: Soldats aéroportés, vétérans et familles

OÙ: Normandie, Ardennes, Pays-Bas

QUOI: Visites guidées, conférences, musées, souvenir

COMMENT: Lectures, photos, expositions, archives

COÛT: \$4K forfait terrestre + billet d'avion

INTÉRESSÉ? Mises à jour à suivre: [Home](#) | [CAFA](#) | [CAFA](#) | [FB](#)

DONS: Pour les frais généraux [CAFA/Charity](#)