



THE MAROON BERET

MAGAZINE FOR THE CANADIAN AIRBORNE FORCES ASSOCIATION



September 2024

www.canadianairborneforces.ca

CAFA PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

COL (RET'D) RICK HATTON

Greetings Jumpers and friends throughout the Canadian Airborne Brotherhood and welcome to our first Maroon Beret Newsletter. Regrettably, due to financial constraints and increasing print production costs, we are no longer able to produce a hard-copy Maroon Beret magazine, but we are resolved to stay in contact with this newsletter and in every way that we can. CAFA is the umbrella organization for military airborne associations in Canada and we strive to be there for all Canadian military parachutists – both active and former. Even throughout the COVID period we adapted and didn't miss a beat, carrying on with all our normal functions and activities. CAFA is fortunate to have a full slate of dedicated and hard-working Executive members as well as skilled and experienced members of our Board of Directors – all volunteers -- who get our business done. With their support and with the support of members across the land we intend to ensure that CAFA remains a healthy, active, competent and relevant association that respects the legacy of Canadian Airborne forces from World War II to the present and that promotes Airborne operational capabilities in the Canadian Armed Forces now and in the future. When the Airborne Regiment Association of Canada (ARAC) folded as an association in 2022, we were pleased to welcome many of their former members into CAFA.

In May, we conducted a very productive Annual General Meeting at the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre at CFB Trenton. We have continued to support the annual Airborne Forces Scholarship and we recently increased the amount of the bursary. With our support, members of CAFA have organized the Cyprus 2024 Commemoration event that will take place in Cyprus in November 2024. We continue to manage the selection process and awarding annually the Airborne Soldier of the Year.

We have recently developed terms of reference and selection procedures for a new award known as the "CAFA Commendation" and presented the first one to the highly deserved Bill Dickson. Our members are present wearing maroon berets at Remembrance Day events across our great land, and at special events such as the Fallen Jumper commemoration at CFB Petawawa, Siffleur Falls in Alberta, the Wings Parade for the Army Cadet Basic Parachute course and many others. Finally – a special thanks to the CO and members of the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre (CAAWC) at CFB Trenton, who have been active, strong and consistent supporters of CAFA and our activities.



CAFA President Col (Ret'd) Rick Hatton presents a St Michael statue to the Commanding Officer of CAAWC LCol Jeremie Gauvreau and DSM MWO Tim Wiebe





Photo: August 9th, 2023 at the Vernon Yacht Club, is the cheque presentation to Kalle on behalf of CAFA by Jake Flanders, formerly of 2 Commando

CAFA SCHOLARSHIP

The 2023 winner of the CAFA \$2,000 scholarship is Kalle Nissila, daughter of former 3 Commando member Jimmy Nissila. This bright young lady is entering her prerequisite year for the dental hygienist program at Okanagan College. She plans on completing those studies, and then perhaps moving on to eventually become a dentist. Her older sister is going into her last year of nursing. The Nissilas have raised two wonderful girls who truly care about giving back to their community.

Information about the scholarship can be found on the website. The total value of the scholarship in 2024 is now \$3000.



CAFA Airborne Soldier of the Year - Sgt Jesse John, 3 RCR

The Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) Soldier of the Year for 2023 is MCpl Jesse John of Mike Company (M Coy) from the 3rd Battalion, the Royal Canadian Regiment (3 RCR). He was promoted to Sgt in 2024.

Sgt John joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 2016 and quickly completed his Basic Parachutist, Basic Mountain Ops, Reconnaissance Patroller and Basic Sniper. He also attended the United States Marine Corps Mountain Scout Sniper course and was the first Canadian Private to ever do so. In August 2022 he deployed on Op UNIFIER Roto 11 as a sniper advisor.

In 2023 he qualified as a Static-Line Jumpmaster and completed his Freefall and Static Line Square qualifications. He later went on to complete his Freefall Jumpmaster and Parachute Instructor. He rounded off his parachuting skills by qualifying as a Static Line Round PI qualification. In December He was the 3 RCR representative in the Christmas Toy Drop Jump held in Fort Liberty, North Carolina where he earned static-line round wings from the Netherlands, Spain, and the United States, plus freefall wings from the United States. Sgt John completed over 150 jumps in 2023 from varying aircraft and chutes. Sgt John fully embodies the virtues of the Airborne and is thus the obvious choice for the Airborne Soldier of the Year award.



Picture: Maj Vollkel and A/RSm White present Sgt John with 2023 Airborne Soldier of the Year Award

CYPRUS 1974 MEMORIAL

COL (RET'D) JAMES HOLSWORTH



Photo: CAFA members at the unveiling of the Cyprus 1974 Memorial in CFB Petwawa on May 5th, 2024. Photo: CAFA members at the unveiling of the Cyprus 1974 Memorial in CFB Petwawa on May 5th,

Cyprus 2024 is the commemoration of Canada's contribution to peacekeeping in Cyprus on the 60 th anniversary of the UN mission, and the 50 th anniversary of a forgotten war. Most Canadians were unaware that, in 1974, Canadian troops were caught in the middle of a war between two NATO allies.

A pilgrimage of over 100 veterans and families will return to Cyprus in November 2024, and the many memories and untold stories of OP SNOWGOOSE, and 1974, will be collected. Over 30,000 Canadians served in Cyprus; we shall remember their sacrifice and the 28 who died there. Memorial plaques are being dedicated at Perron-Berger Park, The Village at Griesbach; Garrison Petawawa Museum; and, Wolseley Barracks, Cyprus.



With thanks to 2 CMBG HQ & Signal Squadron and 1 st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, this Cyprus dedication was held on May 5th, 2024 combined with the annual Fallen Jumper Ceremony which honours the seven soldiers who died in 1968. It was a very meaningful day of Remembrance!

The plaque and stone were funded by the National Wall of Remembrance Association and designed by Campbell Monument. Special thanks to CWO (Ret'd) Ian Husk for his leadership in preparing the ceremony site, and to Museum Curator Ainsley Christensen and Collection Manager Seana Jones for mounting the Cyprus 2024 exhibit.

Padre Lt (N) Wendy Guguid, Pipe-Major Adam Tingskou, CWO (Ret'd) Mel Douglas, CWO (Retd) Frank Grattan, MGen (Ret'd) Walter Holmes, Maj (Retd) JP Hill, and Col (Ret'd) Jim Holsworth, contributed to this moving tribute to the sacrifice of peacekeepers and those who died 50 years ago.



A SPECIAL D-DAY IN THE HEART OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

COL (RET'D) JAMES HOLSWORTH

June 6 th, 2024, Canadians gathered on Juno Beach, to remember those brave souls who stormed the beaches and descended into Normandy 80 years ago, and at the foot of Ex Coelis Mountain, Siffleur Falls, Alberta, the site of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion Memorial. Paratroopers of the Battalion were the first Canadians into France, jumping into Varaville, as part of 6 th British Airborne Division, to secure the east flank of the Normandy bridgehead.

Every year, the Airborne Social Club faithfully mounts this tribute, assisted by the 3rd Battalion PPCLI, British Army Training Unit Suffield, Alberta Parks, Royal Canadian Legion Branches 236, 271 and 285, Veterans Voices of Canada, and Special Service Force Living History, Canadian Airborne Forces Association, and Veterans Food Bank Associations.

Set in the majestic Rockies, fresh mountain air and bright sunshine, 120 Veterans, British and Canadian soldiers, and a Flag Party proudly marched onto parade, along with a CF-18 flypast and a welcome by the Honour Drums of the Stony-Nakoda Bighorn Reserve. Capt (Retd) Bill Dickson, Master of Ceremony, and Padre LCol (Retd) Dave Prouse led the homage, with music by Piper MWO (Ret'd) Colin Norris and Bugler Todd Gow. Sgt (Retd) Darryl Lickers placed sand from Juno Beach and did a Sweetgrass Ceremony. The Rocky Mountain Horse Artillery ceremonial rounds echoed off Normandy and Ardennes Peaks, and caused Saint Michael, the Padre's beagle to bolt.



In recognition of his devotion over 24 years, Bill Dickson was presented the Canadian Airborne Forces Association Commendation, Commander 1st Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group Coin and a commemorative quilt made by Gerry Greschner and Lynn Robb, daughters of the late Norm Toesland, 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion.



A day earlier, 12 soldiers from the Parachute Company, 3rd Battalion, PPCLI, led Major John Sherwood and MWO Jacob Petten, carried the ashes of five comrades-in-arms atop Normandy Peak, to join the ranks as 'Guardians of the Mountain.' The climbing team was presented with Cyprus 2024 commemorative coins in recognition of their continuance of the Airborne legacy which includes the 50th anniversary of the war in Cyprus in which two paratroopers were killed and many wounded. It was a grand occasion, a very special D-Day, inspiring An Ode to the 1 Can Para Memorial at Siffleur Falls by MGen (Retd) Walter Holmes. Lest we forget!



ED MARSHALL'S RETURN TO THE SKY: 100-YEAR-OLD CANADIAN PARATROOPER SKYDIVES FOR CHARITY

BY SAMANTHA WINNICKI

CAYUGA, ON. On July 12, 2024, history was made when Ed Marshall, a 100-year-old Canadian paratrooper, went skydiving to raise money for SickKids Hospital. In tandem with his airborne brother, 37-year-old Afghanistan veteran Adam Winnicki, Ed jumped at 11,000 feet, enjoyed a full freefall and landed softly on the grass on the Skydive Ontario dropzone.



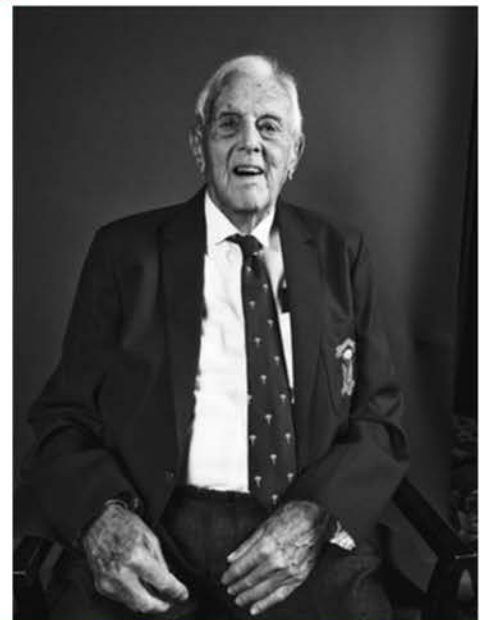
Marshall, who trained as a paratrooper in WWII, recalls that his previous jumps were always “low to avoid detection” and that he wanted to experience “a true free fall, a jump from altitude and a long descent, just to enjoy the ride.” Marshall’s adventure was not one he was embarking on alone. He graciously explained, “If I am to achieve this thrill of a lifetime, I want it to benefit society. I would like my jump to benefit children who need all the support they can get.” His goal was to raise \$100,000 for The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Ontario. One-thousand dollars for every year of his life. Alongside his grandson Bailey Fullan and with the assistance of the Canadian Airborne Forces Association, Marshall was introduced to his tandem instructor Adam Winnicki, a paratrooper in The Queen's Own Rifles and tandem skydive instructor at Skydive Ontario. Winnicki, with 4600+ skydives, over 3000 of them tandems, was honoured to accept the invitation to jump with Marshall,

I’ve been lucky to know a few WWII veterans and Ed is no exception, he has that true warrior mindset,” he said.

The jump was originally scheduled for early June in honour of the paratroopers who participated in D-Day, the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, but was postponed due to strong winds. The Canadian Armed Forces Parachute Team the SkyHawks, who had arranged to join Marshall, were unable to accommodate the new jump date but sent their well wishes.

On the morning of July 12th, Marshall and his family arrived at the dropzone early in order to complete interviews with reporters and prepare for the jump. Marshall’s “100 Year Jump” fundraiser had already raised over \$90,000 and there was excitement in the air that Marshall’s fundraising goal could be reached that day. When it was finally time to go, Marshall, surrounded by four generations of relatives, stood from his chair, stepped into the safety harness and walked with Winnicki to the runway.

At the plane, Marshall met pilot Warren Thomson and videoflyers Nicole Matychuk and Dylan Hrycay. The team discussed the exit and once everyone was ready they took off together down the grassy runway. At altitude, Winnicki stowed Marshall’s expensive hearing aid in his pocket, Matychuk stepped onto the jump platform, and followed by Hrycay, Marshall jumped out of the plane. Marshall’s main parachute was deployed at 5000 feet and at 3000 feet, Winnicki returned Marshall’s hearing aid to his right ear. After a few minutes cruising under canopy, the two paratroopers emerged from a puffy white cloud and landed in the dropzone to the sounds of cheers and applause.



Ed Marshall, the oldest Canadian to skydive, joins an exclusive group of Centenarians who have taken the leap. In 2017, American WWII survivor Bryson William Hayes jumped at 101 years old. Five years later, Sweden's Rut Larsson would become the oldest person to tandem skydive at 103 years old. In May of 2023, Dorothy Hoffner jumped at 104 years old. The current World Record for Oldest Tandem Parachute jump is held by Alfred Blaschke who jumped at an astonishing 106 years old, his third skydive after turning 100. Marshall, who has no plans to jump again, is pleased with the outcome of his 100 Year Jump, successfully raising over \$104,000 for SickKids Hospital and experiencing the thrill of a lifetime.

In honour of his 100th birthday, Ed set himself a goal to raise \$100K in support of Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto - a goal he's now exceeded. "Kids are our future so we have to look after them." - Ed Marshall

2024 CAFA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) conducted its 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Centre (CAAWC) CFB Trenton over the weekend of 24-26 May. Events included a Meet & Greet at the Earl of Bessborough Pub on Friday evening, the AGM meeting on Saturday morning, dinner at the Golden Valley Restaurant in Trenton on Saturday evening and finished with a memorial service on Sunday morning especially recognizing the upcoming 80th anniversary of the Allied D-Day Landings at Normandy.



We were honoured by the CO of CAAWC LCol Jeremie Gauvreau with a briefing on Airborne developments and activities in the CAF. CAFA President Rick Hatton presented an engraved statuette of St Michael the Archangel (the Patron Saint of Paratroopers) to CAAWC in appreciation for their long-standing and generous support to CAFA.

WAR ARTIST ROGER CHABOT - HOT DZ

During the Siffleur Falls D-Day Commemoration War Artist and CAFA member Roger Chabot unveiled his newest painting Hot DZ depicting the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion landing on Drop Zone "V" near Varville, Normandy, in the very early morning hours of D-Day 06 June 1944. If you are interested in purchasing this painting or any of his other work you can do so here <https://www.chabotwarart.com/>



AIRBORNE KIT SHOP

The new Canadian Airborne Forces Association Kitshop can be found at cafakitshop.com. The Canadian Airborne community has been without an official kitshop for over a year. We now have a new online kitshop operated by CPGear. A percentage of every sale using this website goes to supporting the Canadian Airborne Forces Association (CAFA) to support initiatives like the annual Airborne Forces Scholarship bursary and the Airborne Soldier of the Year award.

Items are manufactured & fulfilled from CPGear in Fredericton, NB. A percentage of every single sale on this website goes right back to supporting the Canadian Airborne Forces Association. If you have any feedback, suggestions or questions on how to order through this website, we would love to hear from you. Reach out to us at 506.444.8959 (CPGear, 8:30-5 PM Atlantic Time, Mon-Fri) or email us at orders@cpgear.com.



HOODIE WINGED



HOODIE W'WINGS & 'AIRBORNE PARATROOPER'



CYPRIUS 60TH HOODIE (LOGO IN WHITE)

MEMORIAL DAY 2023 WALLINGFORD CONNECTICUT BY COL (RET'D) DAN CLARKE

In August of 2022, Scoutmaster Michael Gagne from Scout Troop One, Wallingford Connecticut reached out to ARAC, to request some Canadian Flags to be placed on the grave of a 1 Can Para Battalion soldier who was resting among American Veterans in the Saint John Cemetery in Wallingford.



Private Lucien (Red) Larose was the only non-American veteran lying in the Cemetery and the Scouts place flags on all Veterans' Graves on Memorial Day. They wished to so honour Pte Larose's grave as well. Red Larose had been a valuable and notable member of the Wallingford Community.



The Airborne Regiment Association of Canada was pleased and honoured be able to donate a supply of Canadian Flags to decorate the resting place of a member of our predecessor Battalion. On Memorial Day 2023, the Scouts were able to place a flag on Red Larose's resting place.

JOIN CAFA

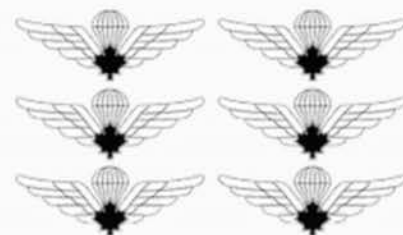
To join CAFA visit the website
www.canadianairborneforces.ca



1 YEAR
\$30



3 YEAR
\$85



6 YEAR
\$160

2024 CADET BASIC PARA

On Friday, July 26th, 2024 the Cadet Basic Para Course graduated at the Canadian Army Advance Warfare Centre at CFB Trenton. Annually CAFA leadership attends to give the cadets wings, coins and a \$500 bursary to the top cadet.



WARRIORS DAY 2024

On August 17th, 2024 members of CAFA participated in the Warriors Day Parade at the Canadian National Exhibition. This was a successful day where the CAFA participants were joined by members of the US Airborne Association. This year's parade was reviewed by Officer, Major-General David Fraser, CMM, MSC, MSM, CD (Ret'd) Honorary Colonel of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.



Members of CAFA and the US Airborne Association march in the Warriors Day Parade at the Canadian national Exhibition in Toronto on August 17th, 2024

A black and white photograph of two men in military uniforms. One man is in the foreground, looking down, while the other is behind him, looking towards the camera. Overlaid on the image is text and logos for an event.

**35th Annual
Airborne Luncheon
April 11th, 2025**

**Royal Canadian Military Institute
426 University Avenue, Toronto
RSVP by April 1st to
susan.cook@rcmi.org**

LAST POST



John "Scotty" Collins. 14 DEC 1940 — 7 MAY 2024



George K Hill who passed away on July 6th, 2024 at the age of 69.



Anthony Welsh who passed away on July 15th, 2024 at the age of 70.

CALENDAR

- 4-13 November 2024 Cyprus Pilgrimage
- 11 April 2025 Airborne Luncheon
- May 2025 Annual General Meeting - Trenton
- 30 June 2025 Scholarship Applications Due

An Ode to the 1 Can Para Memorial at Siffleur Falls

By MGen (Retd) Walter Holmes

Siffleur Falls called and we went,
It was time and effort very well spent,
To remember our Fallen who have gone before,
As the chances are that some of us will be there no more.

The cathedral of the mountains is a Sacred place,
It is such a magical and special space,
Where Veterans gather to remember their brothers,
It is a monument so unlike the others.

We did the deed as one would expect,
With honour, dignity and respect,
In this next year more of our comrades will fall,
And their brethren again will heed the call.

It is to us who remain that they have passed the eternal flame,
To carry as high and proud as they without shame,
And like them we will carry on this way,
Until our own inevitable last day.

When our time is done and we are no more,
It is to the top of the mountains that our ashes will soar,
We will join those many heroes who have jumped from a plane,
Something that, unfortunately, we and they won't do again.

