

MERRY CHRISTMAS

RCMP Veterans-Edmonton Division
December Newsletter - 2024



Merry Christmas Everyone,

As I start this document, it's snowing with freezing rain predicted for the afternoon. It certainly is "Winter" in Alberta! As you may recall, in last month's newsletter I asked if there were any of our members interested in laying a Wreath on behalf of the RCMP Veterans' Association in their community and we, Edmonton Division, were prepared to pay around \$100.00 for the cost of one this year. I also asked for photographs of those attending these events and I am pleasantly pleased with the response. In fact, this was discussed at our Executive Meeting, and we may cover the costs for more than just one wreath next year. Below are pictures I received or ran across at various locations in Alberta. The interesting part is the different ways people recognize and celebrate this day.



To the left we is **Jerry and Ruth Forst** who attended the Glenwood Cemetery in Sherwood Park, and the grave marker

above is Jerry's Dad. The local legion placed poppies on all markers, each year on Remembrance Day numerous military people and their families come to remember and honour the fallen. Jerry mentioned there is no formal ceremony at this location, but the cemetery has numerous recent fallen military people, and the families show up each year to recognize them in, what they call, the Field of Honour.

What a beautiful way to honour and remember your family and friends!

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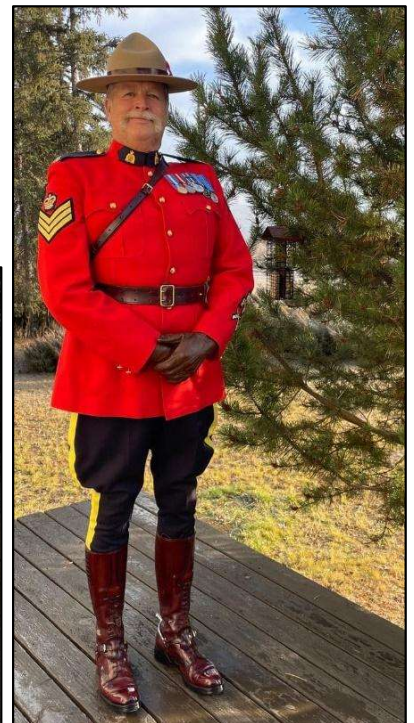
At the Spruce Grove Ceremony, **Vet Bob Copeland** attended with S/Sgt. Rod Koscielny who made the following comments on his Facebook page:

Today I got to recognize Remembrance Day for those that lost their lives, and those who continue to serve the world, our country and our communities. We are in perilous times, but today and everyday should remind us it doesn't stop at one day recognizing those that serve. I am pictured with Mr. Bob Copeland, a family friend who was in the Vietnam War as a Ranger and as you can tell by his medals, a true hero. He went on to serve with my Dad as an Auxiliary RCMP Constable for 25 years. Freedom is earned, and not automatic because of a belief or opinion.

To the left are Parkland Detachment members at the Spruce Grove Remembrance Day Celebrations. In no particular order: Insp Carson Creasor, Insp Breanne Brown, Sgt Melanie Riopel, Cst Jason Wells, S/Sgt Bob Zwarich, S/Sgt Andy Brown, Cst Connor Robertson, Cst Andrew Romanchuk, Cpl Bruce Lussier, Cst Stephen Manuel and at the rear is **Vet Trevor Ferguson**



To the right is Veteran Stephen Pavlov of Jasper who laid a wreath on behalf of the RCMP Veterans' Association at Jasper's Remembrance Day Ceremony held at the Activity Centre. He sent a photo as noted to the right of him, Sgt. Rick Bidaisee, NCO i/c Jasper Detachment and Cst. Miles McCartney all of whom took part in the Ceremony. We covered the cost of the wreath, and by all accounts, the gesture was well received by a full house at the activity centre with approximately 200 people in attendance and Stephen thanked us for the opportunity.



Above we see **Vet Todd Parsons** of Peace River who decided to attend his own ceremony that he and his wife held at their home for their Granddaughters to watch and learn from. What a "great" idea!

Other Detachments below are Lloydminster, Parkland in Stony Plain, Beaumont and Strathcona County.



Lloydminster Detachment – photo provided by Edmonton Vet Paul Vermeulen
 Cst. G. Gabruch, Cst. K. Crossley, Sgt. B. McLean, S/Sgt. Munro (Ret), Cst. C. Booth
 Cst. K. Jeha, Cst. A. Allen, Cst. C. Shupe, Cst. S. Lee, **Edm Vet Sgt. P. Vermeulen**,
 Cst. D. Rohatynski, Cst. J. Rustad, Cpl. T. F. Feasby, PSD Mazzi, Cpl. K. Dalueg, Cpl. C.
 Byford, Cst. Rustad



BEAUMONT DETACHMENT
 L-R Cpl. Andrea Folk, U/K, Cst, Shyla Delowski, U/K, U/K, **Vet Carol Blannin** (hiding in
 the back), and **Veterans' Alanna Jardine, Richard Bates, Eric Lafoy, Seppo Vodkin ,**
Dayle McKibbon and Wayne Legge



Parkland Detachment also represented at Stony Plain's Ceremony by Insp. Kevin McGillivray, Cpl Dan Ferri, Cst Matt Anderson, Cst Jon Frankton, **Veterans' Barry Callbeck, Kees Kikkert & Ron Martineau**, Sgt Caroline Lloy, Cst Steven Lemay, Cpl Cuneyt Zambak and Cpl Steve Molnar



Sherwood Park/Strathcona County Detachment

Two of our Vets, Tom Dunlop and Bruce MacBean took part in the Remembrance Day Celebrations

THANK-YOU FROM VALOUR PLACE

Valour Place recently asked for volunteers at the Yellowhead Casino. Some of the names below are Edmonton Vets and some are not, but all stepped up to help. Their participation is sincerely appreciated and acknowledged by Valour Place.

Names of RCMP Veterans, C/M's, PSE's & Associates Volunteers

Della Lewis, Kerry Blake, **Vern Colley, Chuck Neher, Nick Taylor, Sheila Galenzoski, Robin Bittorf, Trena-Violet Stott, Bob Pitts, Brant Murdoch**, Charlotte Voogd, Nick Marcetta, **Doug Stapleton, Ward Hoffman & Geoff Frisby**

Thank you so much for the support from all these volunteers.

Sylvie Keane
Executive Director
Valour Place

Our Guest Speaker, Stacey Talbot, at our Annual General Meeting (Dinner Meeting) was excellent! She was there to talk about Ned's Wish, an incredible organization which she was instrumental starting up and it has now active Canada wide. The photograph to the right is Stacey during her presentation. Rather than me trying to explain what Ned's Wish is all about, I copied the following from the website:

Ned's Wish: A Cause for Heroes with Paws™

- *Ned's Wish™ is a registered charity committed to supporting law enforcement and the Canadian Armed Forces by providing financial and educational support to enhance the quality of life for their K-9 retirees in Canada.*
- *Due to the cost of health care for retired police or military dogs, the potential to enjoy retirement can quite literally rest on a dime. If health care costs become too high, a dog's quality of life can be significantly reduced, or even cut-short.*
- *We are dedicated to improving the quality of life of retired police and military dogs. We create financial support to aid in the cost of healthcare, and we provide education on the importance of caring for police and military dog retirees.*
- *Because the work police and military dogs do is so physically demanding, families who adopt retired police or military dogs can be left with substantial and costly health issues. It's an unfortunate reality: Medical issues and associated costs can dictate how well, how long or even if police dogs can enjoy retirement.*
- *On average, police and military dogs retire around seven years of age, and the average life span of a police dog is between nine and twelve years. Police dogs comprise a small portion of the canine population, but the majority of their lives are spent in service to ensure the safety and well-being of others. Retired police dogs are near the end of their lives, so by virtue Ned's Wish is about quality, not quantity. Ned's Wish exists to help retired police dogs enjoy their remaining years.*



Following her presentation, we gave Stacey a small token of appreciation as noted in the picture to the right. Later on in the evening, Stacey brought in two of the dogs she currently cares for, and to the left we have Barry Callbeck with the two. One of the dogs is retired from the Force and the other from Edmonton Police Services.



You may have noticed the "ugly Christmas Sweaters" being worn by me and others in some of the pictures. This is something we do every year at the November meeting and to the left we have Cathy Potvin and on the right, Tom & Norma Dunlop.



Stacey Talbot & Kees





Elaine Bennett with judges Mary Corry, Malcolm Mitchell and Geoff Frisby

Of course, when asked to wear an ugly sweater, someone has to judge who has the “Ugliest.” To the left, our three volunteer judges are given final instructions by Elaine.

Two of the contestants were Denise and Tom Burkett. Take a close look at their sweaters. After deliberating, the judges picked the three ugliest as noted to the left.



Denise and Tom Burkett – note the sweaters: “Chest” & “Nuts”



Third place - Bruce Allen, First place - Kees Kikkert and Second place - Eric Lafoy



Kees Kikkert with Stacey Talbot, Sharon Meredith & Lee Grieco-Savoy



I was again honoured to present each of the ladies above a Challenge Coin representing the anniversary of the 50th year females joined the Force.

On the 12th December, Nick Taylor attended his last Valour Place Board of Directors meeting and Christmas function held at the Royal Mayfair Golf Club. On behalf of Edmonton Division, RCMP Veterans’ Association, Nick presented a \$5,000.00 cheque to the Board Chair, Connie Erker as noted to the left. The Board also thanked Nick for his nine plus years on the Board as the Edmonton Division’s Representative presenting him with a small token of their appreciation for being a huge part of the annual Walk for Valour and other fundraisers. They will also place a brick in the “Walk of Fame” sidewalk around Valour Place with Nick’s name and years of service, 2015 to 2024.

On behalf of Edmonton Division, we all thank Nick for his contributions to our Division, and of course, Valour Place!

On the 14th December, Jerry Plastow presented Chris Casey, the Office Manager at the Edmonton Veterans Food Bank a \$1,000.00 cheque on behalf of Edmonton Division as noted in the picture to the right.



As you go through this Newsletter you will notice we now have a new President, David Mitchell. I worked with Dave many years ago in Vegreville, which was his first posting. My, how time flies. I am now the Past President and **will continue as the editor of the Newsletter for six more months.** So, it is **VERY IMPORTANT we find someone to “PLEASE” come forward and take on this very important task!** Note, if I can do this with the limited skills I have, I am sure there is someone out there capable of doing the same. I have learned a great deal since my first production and can easily show anyone how to put these together. For this position, there are several situations I can think of where a person wouldn't have to attend meetings, but that would require some discussion. However, suffice to say, it would be much easier if you did attend both Executive & Dinner Meetings.

At the same time, we are also looking for someone to take on the Secretary position. This position requires that person to join us on the Executive and attend the Executive and Dinner meetings.

If anyone is able to take on this role, please contact me or anyone on the Executive and we can discuss what these positions entail.

New Members Edm Division November 2024

Ron R. PARKIN, Reg. #27297, Leduc, AB
Francine MORIN, Reg. #41270, Sturgeon County, AB
Nathan MACKAY, Reg. #49844, Peace River, AB
Ken Taylor, Reg. #33338, Edmonton, AB

We welcome our new members, of which Ron Parkin transferred in from Ottawa and Ken Taylor from Lethbridge Division's. I hope all of you will be able to join us at our General/Dinner Meetings. In saying that, I realize and understand that might be a little difficult of Nathon.

NOTE: There is lots more I would like to include in this document such as the Christmas Dinner and Silent Auction, etc., but ran out of time so I will follow this up with a short January, 2025 Newsletter.

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to wish all of our Division Members and their families the very best health and good fortune during the forthcoming festive season and for 2025. I especially want to thank our Executive for their dedication and hard work during the past year and to all the other volunteers who helped us.

All the best of the holiday season and have a very Merry Christmas to you and your families.

Kees Kikkert, Past-President
pastpresident@edmrmpvets.ca



Edmonton RCMP Veterans' Executive Meeting Minutes November 21/2024, Woodvale Community Facility

Meeting called to order: 10:00 A.M.

Members Present: Kees Kikkert, Jerry Plastow, Elaine Schnepf, Barry Callbeck, Jim Medley, Dave Mitchell, Bruce Allen, Eric LaFoy, Carol Blannin, Chuck Neher, Linda Plomp.

Unable to Attend: Randy Montgomery, Dianne Lehman, Shane Ramteemal, Leilani Collins, Nick Taylor, Isaac Verbaas

Barry Callbeck, Secretary:

- Motion for acceptance of the minutes for October 24/2024, Seconded by Dave Mitchell, Carried

Kees Kikkert, President:

- Kees spoke briefly on the Association Council Meeting on the 5th November:
 - Discussions around charging Associate Members and the cost to the Association for their inclusion on MMS
 - Veterans' Homelessness: would like to have two Advocate training courses – one east and one west, someone to head/look after arrangements for the training, suggested possible training between Divisions in Provinces, cost of hiring someone or more than one to help with setting up as proper program.
 - Manitoba may hold a scaled down AGM, day one, AC meeting, day two AGM
 - 1733 info on members wishing to be contacted by Vets doesn't seem to be making it to our Association; being worked on.
- Edmonton Division paid for the wreath laid by Vet Member, Stephen Pavlov, at the Jasper Remembrance Day ceremony. Pictures from ceremonies held at Jasper, Beaumont, Lloydminster, Stony Plain, Spruce Grove and the Glenwood Cemetery in Sherwood Park will be included in the December Newsletter.

Linda Plomp, Treasurer:

- Financial Update:
 - Chequing \$33,225.39
 - Total GIC's \$105,968.76
- The AGM Bank Account will be closed moving remaining balance into the General Account and completed before the end of 2024 by Linda and Shane Ramteemal.
- Now that we have received the remaining money from National for expenses at the AGM, we move forward with our 2024 Budgeted Donations as follows:
 - Valour Place - \$5,000
 - Edmonton Veteran's Food Bank - \$1,000
 - RCMP Veterans' Association Foundation - \$500

Dave Mitchell, 2nd Vice President:

- Progress for the File Management Service is being made by the Association although it's moving quite slowly.

Jerry Plastow, Past President:

- The Donation Committee

- Red Coats for Kids charity fundraiser, January 28, 2025, in Sylvan Lake was approved by the Donation Committee for \$200.00 credit at the Gift Shop.
- Social Committee:
 - Registrations for the December 17th Christmas Dinner is going very well.
 - Christmas Hampers: St. Paul and Two Hills Detachments have been identified for Christmas Hampers.

Elaine Schnepf, Director – Boost Program:

- No letters sent due to the postal strike, but in person contact is being made.

Carol Blannin, Director Membership:

- Membership numbers: Active 405 Associate 206 Unpaid 21

Chuck Neher, Director, Valour Place:

- On Nick's behalf, thanks from Valour Place to all the Vet members who volunteered at the Yellowhead Casino for the fundraiser for Valour Place.

Tom Dunlop, Director, Hospital Passes:

- All four areas are busy with some long-term and short-term use, the system is working very well.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

Next Executive meeting: @Woodvale Community Facility January 23/2025 at 10:00 A.M.

Barry Callbeck, Secretary

EDMONTON DIVISION'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 26/2024, Woodvale Community Facility

Meeting Called to Order at 7:20 P.M. by President Kees Kikkert:

Barry Callbeck, Secretary:

- Motion to accept the meeting minutes for the General Meeting for October/ 2024 as published in the November Newsletter. Seconded by Jim Medley. Carried

Carol Blannin, Membership Director:

- Carol presented Service Pins and Bars to:
 - Sharon Meredith – Pin and 5 & 10-year bars
 - Malcolm Mitchell – 10-year bar



Carol Blannin & Sharon Meredith



Carol Blannin & Malcolm Mitchell

Linda Plomp, Treasurer:

- Linda explained that the proposed budget for 2025 was in the November Newsletter and a copy was provided on every table for everyone's information and asked if there were any concerns. There was no response.
 - Linda Plomp then motioned to accept the 2025 budget as published in the November 2024 Newsletter be accepted. Seconded by Jerry Plastow. Carried.

Jerry Plastow, Past President:

- Jerry explained a donation of \$200.00 was made towards a fund-raising initiative in Sylvan Lake called the Red Coats for Kids. They are raising funds to provide sports equipment for children.
- Jerry explained the Silent Auction being held at the Christmas Dinner on December 17th is to raise funds for our Christmas Hampers. He also asked if anyone wished to donate items for the auction to see him or Linda Plomp after the meeting. This year we will be giving Christmas hampers to needy families and Smoky Lake, St. Paul and Two Hills. Jerry is working with the Detachments at those locations.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

- Jerry then advised the membership of the need to fill Executive positions, one for the President's position, 2nd Vice President position and the Secretary position.
 - Jerry called for nominations for the President's position; Bruce Allen nominated Dave Mitchell for President, Seconded by Linda Plomp, Carried. Dave Mitchell accepted the nomination. There were no further nominations for this position, therefore, David Mitchell was elected President.
 - Jerry called for nominations for the 2nd Vice President's position; Don Belke nominated Eric Lafoy for 2nd Vice President, Seconded by Ross Hogg, Carried. Eric accepted the nomination. There were no further nominations for this position, therefore, Eric Lafoy was elected 2nd Vice President.
 - Jerry called for nominations for the Secretary position; there were no nominations, therefore, the current Secretary, Barry Callbeck, will continue in that position.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Next General Meeting Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Barry Callbeck, Secretary



Commanding Officer's Message

Season's greetings, everyone!

Well, the holidays are finally here. For many in our communities, December is a time to gather and celebrate with friends and family. I know that over the holiday season, many of our employees and Vets from across the province will also be participating in charity events or initiatives in the communities they call home. I appreciate your continued work spreading joy even during this busy time of year. I also hope you find time for celebration with loved ones and some well-deserved rest.

As 2024 draws to a close, I've been looking back on the past year and the work of our employees. We've had a lot of successes this past year and are proud of all we've accomplished as we look forward to the next. I've said it before, and I know I'll say again, but I cannot express how proud I am to have the opportunity to work alongside the members of the Alberta RCMP.

To everyone who serves or who has served, thank you. I hope you all have a safe holiday season and a happy new year.

Respectfully,

Rob

Remembrance Day

On November 11, we took the time to honour those who selflessly gave their lives in the service of their country to ensure the safety of others. The RCMP has a long history connecting us to the Canadian Armed forces. Many of our members served in the Canadian Armed forces before joining the RCMP, and the RCMP has represented Canada in conflicts since the 1800s, fighting in conflicts and participating in United Nations peace keeping missions. Thousands of Canadian Police officers have served across the world to help rebuild policing services in areas of conflict. To this day, the RCMP continues provides support in

struggling countries. Our contributions have ensured the safety of people around the world and are something all Canadians can be proud of.

This Remembrance Day, our members participated in events across the province to show our appreciation for our veterans. It is important we never forget the sacrifice made by previous generations, and we always appreciate the freedoms they fought for.



Indigenous Veterans Day

First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada have a long and proud tradition of military service to our country, from First World War veterans to those who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces today. The RCMP played a regrettable role in the marginalization of Indigenous peoples in Canada, contributing to injustices they faced even after their service. While we acknowledge our progress and the steps we are actively taking towards reconciliation, there is still work to be done. On Indigenous Veterans Day, we honoured and remembered the distinct history, the ultimate sacrifices, and the unique experiences of Indigenous veterans.

In honour of Indigenous Veterans Day, Supt. Kim Mueller had the privilege of attending an event at the Alberta Legislature. She was joined by Ret. Chief Warrant Officer and Metis Veteran John McDonald, who proudly served over 70 years for his country with the Canadian Armed Forces, and later with the City of Edmonton. John McDonald was also a member of the Alberta RCMP Commanding Officer's Indigenous Advisory Committee. His dedication to his community continues even in retirement.



Cochrane RCMP shut down human trafficking

Cochrane RCMP recently concluded a significant human trafficking investigation that began in February 2024, when a brave individual came forward to report she was trafficked between 2004 and 2007. Over nine months of thorough investigation, Cochrane RCMP's General Investigation Section uncovered and confirmed similar stories from other victims. On November 7, 2024, RCMP arrested the 47-year-old suspect, who has been charged with several serious offences.

Sgt. Pumphrey, in charge of Cochrane GIS, emphasized the importance of recognizing that human trafficking is a real and present danger in Alberta. With increased awareness and improved training, we are better equipped to support victims through a trauma-informed approach. He highlighted that the courage of survivors coming forward is vital and urged anyone who may have been impacted to reach out to authorities.

Paul Brandt, Alberta-born country singer and strong advocate against human trafficking, also attended Wednesday's press conference to praise the bravery of the victim who came forward. The trauma of human trafficking cannot be understated.



Roving Traffic Unit Make Significant Drug Seizure

On October 23, an officer with the Alberta RCMP Roving Traffic Unit conducted a traffic stop of a truck on Highway 16 near Hinton. During the course of the traffic stop, the investigator made several observations that led him to be suspicious that the lone male occupant was in possession of illegal drugs. With the assistance of Police Dog Cairo, who provided a positive indication for odour of a controlled substance around the vehicle, the officer was able to arrest the suspect and search the vehicle, leading to the seizure of 68 kilograms of cocaine as well as a loaded handgun.



World Kindness Day Cram-a-Cruiser

Over the holidays, many of our detachments engage in charitable events. Our members from Sherwood Park got an early start. To celebrate World Kindness Day, where we're reminded of the power of compassion and the impact of small acts of kindness, our members held a Cram-a-Cruiser event where they collected over \$900 dollars and 4,500 pounds of food to help support the Strathcona Food Bank.



THE LAST POST

Reg #	Name :	Date of Death:	Passed &/or from
27040	Hunchuck, Norman George	2024-11-01	Penticton, BC
21102/0.1158	Shearer, James Stuart	2024-10-30	Calgary, AB
17746	Harvey, Robert Arthur	2024-11-05	Saskatoon, SK
PSE	Klotz, Marlene Rose (nee Domres)	2024-11-01	Regina, SK
18907	Cyr, Jean-Marie Leon Rene	2024-1008	Ottawa, ON
18707	Abud, Joseph-Antoine	2024-11-07	Montreal, QC
C/1244	Teixeira, Heinrich Julian	2024-11-10	Ottawa, ON
19428	Burbridge, John Rexford	2024-11-22	Ottawa, ON
18765	Penkala, Thadeaus Felix "Ted"	2024-11-21	Ottawa, ON'
17809/0.769	Powell, George Herbert	2024-11-23	St. John's, NL
21459	Dominie, Calvin Randell	2024-11-19	St. John's, NL
42208	Bruno, Darrel Regan	2024-11-19	Ponoka, AB
38748	Smyth, Wayne Frederick	2024-11-07	Whitehorse, YK
23832	O'Neil, Perley Joseph	2024-11-27	Ottawa, ON
29658/.1674	Heald, Dinnis M.	2024-11-27	Winnipegosis, MB
34671	Campbell, David Munro	2024-11-26	Fort Erie, ON
34853	Fenton, Charles "Dick" Richard Artur	2024-11-06	Nanton, AB
27210	Grudgfield, Donald Edward	2024-09-15	Smithers, BC

C7218	Ballantyne, Daniela Maria Plastina	2024-11-29	Port Berry, ON
19901	Anderson, Robert John	2024-11-28	Red Deer, AB
A/Cst.	Croisdale, James Earl	2024-11-29	Wasa, BC
C5172	Sait-Pierre, Danielle	2024-11-20	Ottawa, ON
42668	Barnett, George Edward	2024-11-23	Langley, BC
19225	O'Hara, T.M. Gerald "Gerry"	2024-12-05	Hamilton, ON

May they rest In Peace

Should anyone wish more information on anyone on the list you can go to the National website at https://www.rcmpvets.ca/last_post.php and/or the RCMP Graves site <https://www.rcmpgraves.com/index.html>