



**AIRBORNE SOCIAL CLUB
NORTHTOWN PO, BOX 71034
9308 - 137 AVENUE
EDMONTON, ALBERTA T5E 6J8
APRIL 2020**



EDITOR'S MESSAGE

This newsletter was scheduled to be by end-March but given today's pandemic situation, it as with most all other activities, etc took the back burner until today.

This COVID virus has taken over most of our lives. We seem to be either watching or waiting for local and national updates, whether or not our kids or grandkids have employment or who in our realm has come down with this virus. Thank God, I can report as of this date, April 6th, there are no known cases from within our club.

Regrettably, this newsletter as with others highlights a few recent deaths of members of the club and spouses. As above, none of which are known to have been COVID related. Several of these announcements had memorial dates indicated, however virtually all gathering and activities has either been put on hold or suspended until further notice. Updated announcements will be made known if/when advised.

On a personal note, please stay safe, keep positive and remember, "this too will pass". Do something special with your families that this social distancing and isolation has imposed upon us. As Sergeant Phil Esterhaus, from Hill Street Blues would say: "Let's be careful out there".

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vfy5QU_QbII

Thanks to Eric Manchester for the interesting article he has submitted. I encourage others to send submission appropriate for future publications.

THE GEEZERMOBILE AND ME: A WIDOWER'S JOURNEY GETTING BACK ON THE ROAD. By Eric Manchester (Published in RV Travel)
<https://www.rvtravel.com/geezermobile939/>

Mona died somewhere between hoping and planning. For all our 29 years together, road tripping was a shared delight. First, in our old Triumph TR6 sportscar, then in our succession of minivans to accommodate Mona's many, complex and worsening health conditions. When it became too painful for Mona to even ride to the grocery store, it seemed that our days being someplace "out there" might be over. New possibilities emerged in 2016 with our acquiring Geezermobile,

a 1998 Triple E Commander motorhome. At 34' in length, and built for Canadian weather conditions, our Class A rig comprised amenities and comfort enough for us to resume thumbing through our collection of road atlases. We seldom had a destination in mind, but even when we did, our travels resembled itinerant wanderings in search of Mom & Pop diners, good bread, and pie – as far off the main highways as the Geezermobile could handle.



After experimenting with journeys ranging from one week to more than a month, nearby and across the country, it looked like 2019 (finally free of deadlines and schedules) would herald the start of much longer trips around Canada, if not much of North America. But, barely into that year, new and much worse health issues piled onto Mona's already substantial collection of life-threatening conditions. Emergency repairs were done in April, then again in June; ultimately, catastrophic events overtook all hope. Mona died in November 2019 (age 67), having never gotten beyond mapping out our newfound freedom. Mona and I will have one final road trip together when I take her home to Ontario where she will be laid to rest beside her late parents.



Now, at age 70 and alone (except for the support of my sparse family and aging Army paratrooper buddies) I'm intending to roll out aboard Geezermobile and put rubber on the map tracings to the places we wanted to explore. Our keen interest was to experience rustic, small places that punctuate vast expanses of scenic wonder (and maybe to document their triumphs and struggles to survive in the midst of what is often alarming rural decline) – not to mention finding those Mom & Pop diners, good bread and pie. Yet to be determined is what combination of full timing or long timing my odyssey will be.

LAST POST



This edition may have missed notices of airborne comrades who passed since last publication. We try to acknowledge all those who have passed on. Regretfully though full details are not always known or available at time of publication.

BARRY CHAMBERLAIN



**MAY 1945 -
JANUARY 2020**

It is with great sadness that the family of William (Barry) Chamberlain announces his passing January 27, 2020, at the age of 74 years. Barry will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 48 years, Pat and his two children, Mary (Stacey), R. Charlie (Val). Barry will also be fondly remembered by his three grandchildren, Shy-Anne, Cole and

Everly; by his brother David (Jean), sister-in-law Sheila (Greg) and several nieces and nephews.

A viewing was held February 1, 2020 with the funeral being held on February 4th.

Rest in Peace Barry, your humour and smile will last forever.

EDWARD LAWRENCE ASHLEY NOVEMBER 1945 - JANUARY 2020



It is with great sadness we announce the sudden passing of Edward Lawrence Ashley on January 8th, 2020 at his home in Chilliwack BC at the age of 74.

Edward is survived by Marianna Ashley (Wright), his wife of 50 years. Daughters,

Kathryn Pite, Virginia Ashley (Glen), and sons, Thomas Ashley, Robert Ashley (Tammy). Grandchildren, Henry, Catherine, Daniel, Jessica, Alyssa, Riley, Kymmie, Kaeden, Chayce and Montana, and brothers, Jerry, Gary, and sisters, Valerie, Arlene, Edith, Rosie.

Born in Driftpile Alberta. Edward grew up in Faust Alberta and was the oldest of 11 children. He was predeceased by his parents, John and Susan Sawan, sisters, Judy and Rita and brothers Roland and Johnny.

Edward joined the Canadian Armed Forces at the age of 16 years. After a successful career with the service, he embarked on a second career with the Chilliwack School District as a school bus driver and then as the School Bus Supervisor. He enjoyed camping, fishing, golfing and most of all spending time with his family and close friends.

Ed will be missed by all who knew him.

Celebration of life was held in Chilliwack January 20th, 2020



**GOEF CROSSMAN -
NOVEMBER 1957 -
JANUARY 2020**

Geof joined the 1ST Battalion, PPCLI, Calgary, March 1975. He volunteered and was posted to 2 Commando in 1977 and was promoted to Corporal in 1979. Promoted to Master Corporal in 1980, he

went with 2 Commando to Cyprus the same year. In 1982 he became a member of the SKYHAWKS

Parachute Team in Edmonton and promoted to Sergeant in 1984. From 1985-88 he was a Parachute and Free Fall Instructor at the Canadian Airborne Centre. In 1988 he was posted back to 1PPCLI and went with the Battalion to Cyprus in 1990. Promoted to Warrant Officer in 1993 he was posted to Land Forces Central Area, Toronto (1993-95) and went to Croatia in 1993 as Mortar Platoon Warrant Officer attached to 2PPCLI Battle Group. Geof was posted to the 2PPCLI Winnipeg in 1995 and went to Bosnia as Mortar Platoon Warrant Officer in 1997. He served with the 2PPCLI until 1997 until his posting to the PPCLI, Regimental Museum, Calgary as the Assistant Curator in 1997. Geof retired from the Service in 2001. A Celebration of Life date to be confirmed

MESSAGE FROM A FALLEN COMRADE

My helmet, now a halo
wings replace my chute,
to fly amongst the eagles
no Soldier would dispute.
No aircraft is needed
to take me to the sky,
your prayers from below
have lifted me so high.
My spirit is my engine
no need to refuel,
no runway required
a rainbow's edge will do.
No need for maps or compasses,
my angels are my guides,
their strength and love have gifted me
to soar the sky with pride.
The heavens here are endless
my soul's now free to roam,
there is no need to cry my friends;
This Airborne Trooper found his home.

Unknown

REMEMBERING DEPARTED WIVES

Not only do we remember our departed airborne brothers, we also acknowledge the passing of wives and partners who, over the years stood by us as we ventured off to parts known and unknown. Most often, they were mother and father, nurturer, educator and disciplinarian. Many times these independent women moved themselves and families from one location to another during our absences from home. Where would many of us be today if it were not for these stalwart women, and for that, we honour their memory.

MONA FERGUSON, MONA 1952-2019. Mona was the partner of WO (Ret'd) Eric W. Manchester. She passed away on November 19th after a brief

illness. "Mona collapsed at home on Sunday, November 10th and went to the E.R. via ambulance, where they discovered a massive wound and an inoperable tumour. Things just got worse from there, and it all eventually overwhelmed her already-compromised and complex health. She had a serious cardiac event in the recovery unit following a high-risk surgery to try to mitigate the



wound damage. I lived at the hospital with her since the 10th, and held her in my arms as she passed away this morning. There will not be a funeral instead, she will be cremated.

Mona and I will have one last road trip together. I promised that I would get her home to be interred with her parents at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. I guess that will complete my 28-year mission of trying to keep us moving forward, getting Mona what she needed, and trying to keep her as safe as circumstances allowed. I hope that Mona felt that I mostly succeeded." Eric....*First published 28 Nov 2019.*

ADRELLA LENORA (YOURTH) OLMSTEAD

Adrella Lenora (Yourth) Olmstead. On March 30, 2020, Ardella Lenora Olmstead passed away peacefully at the age of 84. Adrella will be lovingly remembered by her children Debra (Dan) and Rodd, grandchildren Andrew (Kerrie), Colin (Ashley), Hunber, Charlotte and Abby, great-grandson Graham and brother Vaughn Yourth as well as close friends Anne, Fran, Kathy, Olga, Myrna and Peter. At Ardella's request, cremation has taken place and a Celebration of her Life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society www.cancer.ca

In Ardella's name. Family meant everything to Ardella and she will be sorely missed.

D-DAY 2020 SIFFLEUR FALLS

Given the governments' cancellation and closure of all national and provincial park activities during this pandemic, this year's ceremony has been put on hold until such time as the green light is given to resume some sort of normality. Bill Dickson has advised he should be at the monument on June 6th

to lay a wreath and will confirm situation and details at a later date.

MESSAGE FROM - VETERANS VOICES OF CANADA-FLAGS OF REMEMBRANCE

Hello everyone. I am hoping this email finds you all well. We sure are living in crazy times these days. Well, I have some updates and some news regarding our annual tribute to our past and present heroes.

Obviously, because of the Corona Virus our annual Opening and Closing Ceremonies will not take place as per usual. That said, our 128 Canadian flags will go up as usual, and this year from September 12th until November 12th. We feel, especially now it is so important to have our flags of Remembrance flying.

As many of you know, it is going to be tougher times for us as a nation this year. This will affect many individuals, businesses as well as non-profit charities like Veterans Voices of Canada.

As we depend on grants that are more or less non-existent this year because of the virus, we are expecting little or no dollars from those funding streams.

Our Veterans Voices of Canada-Flags of Remembrance tribute is not only an amazing tribute, but also our only annual fundraiser and we expect that will take a severe hit as well funding wise in 2020.

That said, please read the attached piece of information as we have modified our tribute event for this year to allow the opportunity to honour a special group of warriors **"your warrior"**.

Again, as we all know it will be a tough year for everyone, but we hope that you can help VVOC continue its great work of commemoration, historical Veteran documentation, education of our public as well as tributes and displays across Canada throughout the year. You can do this by sponsorship and honouring your hero (contact me here at ac@vetvoicecan.org) or through general donation at our website vetvoicecan.org (every little bit helps).

We appreciate your past and future support, without you, we cannot continue to do the great work we do...Cheers, stay safe and stay healthy!

Al Cameron
Founding CEO, Veterans Voices of Canada
Veterans Voices of Canada-Flags of Remembrance
(403) 358-6313 / (403) 887-7114

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

In accordance with Club By-Laws once, a membership reaches end-December for that year paid-up period that membership will have until end-June the following year to either renew or have their name placed on an inactive listing, i.e. end-December 2019/June 2020. Membership is open to paratroopers of all categories, former or current. Membership dues is established at \$10 yearly.

As the club secretary and membership representative, I endeavour to keep our membership contact information up-to-date. Our normal method of contact is through email, less mailing of cards. If you have moved or had a postal or email address changed since last contact please let me know so I can make corrections. In addition, if you know of any member who may have moved or are not receiving the newsletter contact me at dr.paris@shaw.ca

HOSPITAL MEMBER

The club hospital member, on behalf of the club provides notification of members hospitalized or at home recouping. If you know of anyone who may not be doing well, please let Ben know so he can arrange to visit and deliver hospital comforts. Ben's contact info: ben.murdock@shaw.ca

KIT SHOP

Kit shop and other related airborne items; prints, books and items are available through Bill Dickson: abn339@shaw.ca

OBITUARY FOR THE LATE MR. COMMON SENSE



Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth record were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered, as having cultivated such valuable lessons as, knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm; life is not always fair; and maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (do not spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a

classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get Parental consent to administer a Band-Aid to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims did.

Common Sense took a beating when you could not defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason.

He is survived by his three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else Is To Blame, and I'm A Victim.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing...Unknown!



Club member Mike Muranetz and wife Susan pose with The Honourable Lois E. Mitchell, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta and distinguished guests at Government House.



MESSAGE FROM A FALLEN COMRADE

My helmet, now a halo
wings replace my chute,
to fly amongst the eagles
no Soldier would dispute.
No aircraft is needed
to take me to the sky,
your prayers from below
have lifted me so high.
My spirit is my engine
no need to refuel,
no runway required
a rainbow's edge will do.
No need for maps or compasses,
my angels are my guides,
their strength and love have gifted me
to soar the sky with pride.
The heavens here are endless
my soul's now free to roam,
there is no need to cry my friends;
This Airborne Trooper found his home.
....Unknown



Captain (Ret'd) Gord Carter, MMM, CD
April 5, 2020