



*Happy 25th*

*This issue of The Common Thread is  
dedicated to our dear colleagues*

*- Those Who Served -*

*and to the great memories they left us*

The following piece was written over fifteen years ago by the late Geoff Lane. We reprint this in Geoff's memory with sincere respect and gratitude and we dedicate this to our current and former colleagues who served our country.

**Heroes Still With Us**

Three generations living today in Commonwealth and Allied countries have a past generation to thank for the very real fact that they are 'free' - free to live, free to choose and free to pursue a measure of happiness.

Without the bravery and support of western world men and women who volunteered to serve in the Second World War, all of us alive today could well have been enslaved.

Almost 70 years ago the first page was written in the most horrifying chapter the history of warfare. Within the next six years more than 20 million people died and countless thousands were left starving and stateless.

What began with one man's fanaticism ended in peace but with a world torn apart.

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By dint of geography, Canada was fortunate. However, its armed forces bore a hefty share of casualties and suffering on three continents and once again this November we pay a sincere tribute to those who died and to those who served and survived.

Many veterans of WWII are still with us, thankfully, but each year their number decreases although the valor of those who are left remains undiminished.

In the ranks of the retired are soldiers, sailors and airmen who can still recall vividly the gore and glory of the battlefield. Each has a unique story to tell, although few care to dwell on what was, literally, hell on earth.

Again this year special mention should be made of those among us who fought for King and Country. Lambton College has had more than its share of service heroes, some volunteers, some conscripted. All did their part in preserving our future.

### ***Geoff Lane***

The following colleagues had military service prior to joining faculty & staff at Lambton College.

<b><i>Bruce Allen</i></b>	<b><i>Royal Canadian Air Force</i></b>	<b><i>1941-45</i></b>
<b><i>Bill Burgess</i></b>	<b><i>Royal Canadian Air Force</i></b>	<b><i>1941-45</i></b>
<b><i>David Cheney</i></b>	<b><i>Royal Canadian Army</i></b>	<b><i>1940-45</i></b>
<b><i>Wolfgang Franke</i></b>	<b><i>German Navy</i></b>	<b><i>1940-45</i></b>
<b><i>Gerry Grevstad</i></b>	<b><i>Royal Canadian Air Force</i></b>	<b><i>1950-52</i></b>
<b><i>Art Haggart</i></b>	<b><i>Royal Canadian Air Force</i></b>	<b><i>1946-75</i></b>
<b><i>Charles Harrison</i></b>	<b><i>British Army</i></b>	<b><i>1940-45</i></b>
<b><i>Russell Hart</i></b>	<b><i>Royal Canadian Air Force</i></b>	<b><i>1943-68</i></b>

<b>Bruce Hepburn</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Air Force</b>	<b>1951-75</b>
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<b>Geoff Lane</b>	<b>British Army</b>	<b>1940-48</b>
<b>Ron Lawrence</b>	<b>British Army</b>	<b>1942-45</b>
<b>Josh Lipszyc</b>	<b>Portugese Navy</b>	<b>1964-68</b>
<b>Bill Lovsin</b>	<b>Dept of National Defence</b>	<b>1956-58</b>
<b>Dennis McLeavey</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Air Force</b>	<b>1941-45</b>
<b>Erik Norman</b>	<b>Norwegian Navy</b>	<b>1940-45</b>
<b>Des Pigott</b>	<b>British Army</b>	<b>1951-53</b>
<b>Mel Pratt</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Air Force</b>	<b>1953-76</b>
<b>Camilla (Rigby) Tod</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Air Force</b>	<b>1950-52</b>
<b>Bruno Sawicki</b>	<b>Polish Army Corps</b>	<b>1940-46</b>
<b>Heinz Schmidt</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Navy</b>	<b>1960-68</b>
<b>George Shaw</b>	<b>British Navy</b>	<b>1940-45</b>
<b>Joe Sowinski</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Army</b>	<b>1942-45</b>
<b>Delores Trevail</b>	<b>Royal Canadian Army</b>	<b>1942-45</b>

*Please let us know if we have missed anyone.*

*Happy 25th*

*This is the sixth in a series devoted to*

**- THOSE WHO SERVED -** *and their stories*

*The following is an account of Camilla (Rigby) Tod's military service.*

*Cam worked in many different secretarial student service positions while at Lambton College.*



I joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in London Ontario in July 1950; I was 21 years old at the time. I was transferred along with about forty other new recruits from across Canada to St John, Quebec for eight weeks of basic training.

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The base at St John was not ready for us so we had just basic bunk beds in a Quansit Hut. Going into the mess hall for the first time was traumatic since there were about a thousand men and only forty women!

We spent many hours on the parade square and because of the “wedge” cap we had to wear, I had a permanent white “V” on my forehead. My nose burned, blistered and peeled the whole time I was there.

Upon completion of basic training I was posted to Clinton, Ontario where I received training in Communications as a Teletype Operator. After graduation, I declined the opportunity to remain at the base and teach the Teletype Course, and went on to the base at Trenton.

In 1951 I celebrated my first year with my first flight, a special experience.

It seems they needed NCO's, so I was lucky to earn my Corporal's “hooks” quicker than most.

After applying for discharge in October 1952, I was told that my orders had come in and that I had a chance to delay and go to France and Germany - I really had to think about that one - but in the end I took my discharge.

I have been a member of the RCAF Association for over 25 years.

Cam Tod

*Happy 25th*

*“It's our 25th Anniversary – Please come and  
join us for Christmas Dinner ”*

**Where:** *Quality Inn – 751 North Christina Street, Sarnia*

**When:** *Dec 6<sup>th</sup> - Cocktails : 5:00 pm - Dinner: 6:00 pm*

**Cost:** *\$30. per person (member & significant other) -  
taxes & gratuity included)*

**PLEASE NOTE:** *Your club is subsidizing some of this  
event. Non members \$35. per person*

*A Christmas Dinner featuring Oven Roasted Turkey, dinner rolls, tossed garden salad, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable medley, stuffing & cranberries . For dessert, apple blossom, Coffee & tea. Pasta dishes are available on special order. There will be a Cash Bar.*

**RSVP by December 4th.**

*Call Alma (519-336-9108) or Mel (519-344-2931)*

*Let Alma or Mel know if you need a ride*

*In keeping with the spirit of the season please bring a  
donation of non-perishable food items for the Lambton College  
food bank or new unwrapped toys for the Salvation Army.*

*Thank you.*

*Happy 25th*

## **Hello from Halifax, from Larry Suffield**

For some time, I have wondered about what my college colleagues were up to, especially where they have gone, and what they have experienced in our great country. Accordingly, I have submitted this note about our move to Halifax. As strange as it sounds, the move to Halifax started with a trip to British Columbia. In the summer of 2021, we took a two-month trip to BC to explore and investigate moving there. The scenery was great, but the smoke from wildfires blocked the view of the mountains on a few days, and on other days there were warnings to avoid outdoor activities because of the poor air quality. Hence, British Columbia was crossed off the list. Our focus shifted east and we decided to move to Nova Scotia. We moved to Halifax in spring 2022, and what follows is a partial account of what we have experienced. When I looked at the first draft of this story, I saw that it appeared to be a brochure trumpeting Halifax. I could either scale it back, or add even more Halifax positive material. I opted for the later – if it reads like a Halifax marketing piece, so be it. Also, my apologies to the people from the English department, I did not have a copy editor for this.

Weather. <https://weatherspark.com/> is a website that provides weather information for cities around the world. The following is a link that compares the weather in Sarnia and Halifax:

<https://weatherspark.com/compare/y/28434~17373/Comparison-of-the-Average-Weather-in-Halifax-and-Sarnia> The temperature comparison graph shows temperatures that have not been adjusted for humidity, i.e. it does not show the “feels like” temperatures. The summer Halifax temperatures are even more moderate than Sarnia when that is taken into account. On the day that I wrote this the “feels like” temperature here was 27 degrees while the temperature in Sarnia was forecasted to reach 41 degrees. For winter outdoor enthusiasts, Halifax is supposed to get more snow, although that did not happen in our first winter. Spring is a little “later” in Halifax - April and May are cooler than Sarnia.

Friendly people. I have found the people of Nova Scotia to be warm and friendly. On one of my first days here I was driving to a store and I had stopped to make a left turn into an entrance. A driver coming toward me stopped his car and waived me to make the turn in front of him. Drivers regularly stop for cyclists where a bike path crosses a roadway even though the cyclists have a stop sign and cars have the right of way. I know this happens in Ontario as well, but I have experienced it more here. A final event at a Tim Hortons drive through illustrates my point. Shortly after arriving, when I still had Ontario plates on the car, the lady at the window in a warm voice with a smile welcomed me and asked how long we were staying. Weeks later, now with Nova Scotia plates, the same lady remembered me and asked how I liked the area, and called me “hon”. Hearing “hon”, for a moment I thought that I was not looking so old after all. But then I came to my senses and realized that I was still old and she was just being friendly.

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Outdoor pursuits. There is no shortage of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in Nova Scotia. We have joined a walking group, a hiking club, and a cycling club. Hiking is great – there is nothing like the sight and sound of the waves along the ocean shore. The cycling is fantastic. Although Halifax is hilly, there are some flat trails on abandoned railbeds with beautiful scenery. One of the rail trails is the Rum Runners Trail (<https://destinationtrailsnovascotia.com/trails/rum-runners-trail/>) that runs 119 K from Halifax to Lunenburg. In order to manage the hills and cycle longer each day, and hopefully for additional years, we bought e bikes. That is a long story in itself. I will just mention there might have been a time when I thought an e bike was for a wuss. What was I thinking? It is now possible to go longer and farther, and take on hills that otherwise would not be possible. Nova Scotia has a \$500 rebate program for e bikes that took away some of the sting of the purchase.

Entertainment. We have been able to take advantage of some of the venues that a larger city offers such as the Dalhousie Arts Centre (<https://www.dal.ca/dept/arts-centre.html>). There are also many smaller entertainment spots that are recommended, for example, if you get a chance visit the Red Shoe pub in Mabou on Cape Breton Island.

If anyone has any suggestions on places to visit in Canada, I welcome them. If anyone is planning a trip to Halifax, let me know if I might be able to add to your google search.

Regards, Larry

[larrysuffield@yahoo.ca](mailto:larrysuffield@yahoo.ca)

### **Its that time of the year again ~**

Annual membership dues are due by November 30<sup>th</sup>. Please send your cheque for \$10.00, (the LCRC membership) or \$20.00, which would also include your annual membership with the Ontario Colleges Retirees Association. Please mail to ....

**Lambton College Retirees' Club - Cathy Bull 1150 Fairlane Ave, Sarnia, ON N7S 3K1**

**OR “e transfer” your dues to Mel Sparks at [patmelsparks@gmail.com](mailto:patmelsparks@gmail.com)**

Thank you



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OCRA Membership Update

This year for the first time, OCRA, the Ontario College Retirees Association, has sent membership billing to our members who had previously joined OCRA but who may have not paid for the past few years. It has caused confusion for some our members. We have many local members who have never been an OCRA member. We are one of a few colleges who collect and remit these OCRA dues.

They do not require payment for missed years.

**Your LCRC Executive Committee –**

Alma Brown, Cathy Bull, Terry Cameron, Mary Leckie,

Josh Lipszyc, Pat O'Connor, Gerry Page, Mel Sparks,

Kathi Vandenheuvel, Ursula Westelaken, Ray Wreford



