



Photo by Franki Ikeman

A day to remember

Doris Hope and Bruce Bullock chat while waiting for the Remembrance Day ceremonies to begin at the Ottawa's National War Memorial Tuesday. Hope and Bullock are Second World War veterans.

RCAF veteran shares story of war

By Sarah Robertson

"Then I was given the only choice I ever had in the air force, I could either be a navigator, wireless operator or a bomb aimer."

William (Bill) Robertson is a 93-year-old Royal Canadian Air Force veteran who served in the Second World War. He grew up in Little Italy, Toronto, Ont, and now lives in Belleville.

"I remember it was 1929 and I was going to school. My father had lost his job. He was a shares banker by trade and he lost his job because no one was buying shares in those days."

At the early age of eight, Robertson and his family of seven moved into his grandparents' house while his father found work.

"He was looking for anything he could to make a dollar and I mean literally, if he came home with a dollar a day that would have been something!"

In September 1939, Robertson first heard about the war while he was playing in the schoolyard.

"All us boys were 18 and discussing how we were gonna wipe Hitler off the map. Ya know boys brag."

It was then that Robertson decided that he would join the service. His dad always said however, that education added no weight to your shoulders so you should get as much as you can. Because of this, Robertson decided to complete Grade 13 and apply to the air force when he finished.

"I graduated in June 1940. I didn't have much money. I saw one of my older brothers looking in a window, deciding what kind of chocolate bar he wanted.

I thought, 'Wow, must be nice having enough money to decide what kind of chocolate bar you want to buy.' But I came out and worked for about a year and in March '41, I tried to join the air force but they said I wasn't in good enough health."

Robertson weighed 115 pounds. He wasn't able to play on any sport teams because athletes had to be at least 130 pounds. Robertson started swimming, biking and exercising on his own in an effort to bulk up.

"I went back in '42 and was now a strapping 118 pounds and I found a secret! If I drank a chocolate malted milk I would gain one pound. So the day I was going down to weigh in at medical, I had two milks! They accepted me because I was in better shape."

Robertson tried to be a pilot but thought he had mild colour blindness. He drove a plane simulator, which they called a Lincoln, and landed his 70 feet under ground.

Robertson chuckled, "They didn't think I'd make a good pilot and I kind of have to agree."

That's when Robertson was given the only choice he ever had while in the air force. He decided to be a bomb aimer. Robertson got his wings in March of '43 and a month later he landed in England. Nine of his 12 trips over Europe were to bomb the marshalling yards. This was done because it made it difficult to move troops or material.

"We had to circle around to head home, and this was 25 miles from the German border, and that's when a fighter attacked us."

"The most recent strategy they had was

to fly underneath us. They had their guns set pointing up. He fired up and put one of our starboard engines on fire and he set the starboard side of the fuselage on fire. At that time our pilot was having difficulty flying and he said, 'Jump, jump!'"

It was at that point that Robertson and his crew bailed out of the plane. They did all their bombing at night, so when they jumped they had no idea where they might be landing.

"I knew the plane was gone, so I ripped my chord and I guess you could say I felt a little religious hoping the shoot would open. I was praying!" laughed Robertson.

"The shoot is attached to you like a harness. One comes over your shoulder, one over the other shoulder, one up the groin and so on. There are five straps and just like in the car it clicks in. When you touched the ground, you clicked the thing for a quick release."

"What they didn't tell us is when the shoot opens all the jolt is right at the groin. I'm quite serious about this, although it's kind of humorous, I honestly thought I wasn't going to have any children in the future!" he giggled.

Robertson landed in a field and was able to hide for several hours in case the enemy was looking for him. He tried to sleep but could not and felt a deep loss of freedom.

He wasn't able to write or call home to let his parents and friends know he was safe. He didn't know where his next meal was coming from. He wasn't able to talk to anyone. He was swallowed up by loneliness.

...See War, page 4



Photo by Sarah Robertson

Bill Robertson, 93, sits in his home on Saturday. Robertson is a Royal Canadian RCAF veteran who served in the Second World War. His plane was shot down in 1943, and he and his crew had to bail out while in the air. Robertson was in hiding for four months behind enemy lines.

We remember

By Hannah Eden

Stories, memories and a moment of silence were shared at Loyalist College Alumni Hall on Tuesday, Nov. 11.

The day was marked with personal memoirs and biographical tales of war from special guests, Major Allan Ferris, commanding officer, 8 ACCS and local author Mary Thomas, whose journalism relates to Canadian Forces.

President of Loyalist College, Maureen Piercy, started the ceremony with the placing of a wreath of poppies alongside Ferris and Warrant Officer Kevin Murphy.

Piercy's brief welcome paid special tribute to Cpl. Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, who lost their lives last month whilst serving

their country.

The slow, majestic sound of the trumpet, played by retired professor Andy Sparling from the broadcast journalism program, was followed by two minutes of silence for a time of reflection.

The poem *In Flanders Fields* was shared by a Loyalist College student government representative as the full auditorium listened in silence to the poignant words.

However, it was Major Ferris who brought a modern take on war and its effects. He shared stories of his deployment to Afghanistan in 2007. Ferris shared three themes, which were formed from things he has learned and been witness to in his career.

The first theme he discussed was, "It's a nation that goes to war, not necessar-

ily a regiment."

After being deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, for a security mission, Ferris said he swiftly realized the importance of Canada's foreign involvement.

"When I walked into the Canada House," said Ferris, "the walls were plastered with letters ... the support we received on a daily basis had a profound impact on me."

Ferris shared stories of joy and not of sorrow as he reassured the attentive audience of the importance of Canada's foreign involvement. Telling the tale



Major Allan Ferris

of a young boy who was able to go to school, a boy Ferris had befriended during his deployment, Ferris shared, his next theme, "We make the difference."

The third and final theme was one of a more pressing issue – the importance of you.

Ferris left the audience with a very weighted message of responsibility, a message based around democracy and public involvement with foreign policy.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Ferris, looking directly at the audience, "you decide who the government is. So regardless of what your political affiliation is, remember it is not myself who decides who goes, when we go, to what conflicts we go – it's the government that decides. Your government."

This message of democracy and

choice left a profound effect on Loyalist College public relations student Julia Vriend who, at the end of the ceremony, made her way to the front of the Alumni Hall to give thanks to Ferris for his words of hope.

"I really appreciated what he said at the very end about it really matters who you vote into parliament," said Vriend.

"I never really thought about it that way ... I wanted to thank him personally."

Vriend said she also has a tough time dealing with the emotions of Remembrance Day as she, like most young people, had a grandfather who fought in World War Two – a war which today was remembered among, sadly, so many others.



Photo by Moush Sara John

Flypast being performed by the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association and the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum at the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Old Town Hall in Toronto Tuesday.



Photo by Sarah Robertson

A young girl points out names at the cenotaph that served during the war after the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Belleville.



Photo by Thomas Surian

Cadets perform an honour guard at the Trenton cenotaph.



Photo by Moush Sara John

Elaine Selby clutches on to her dad Norm Selby's photograph, while attending the Remembrance Day events at the Old Town Hall in Toronto.



Photo by Thomas Surian

Air Cadet Cpl. Shoushounov lays a wreath at the Trenton cenotaph following Remembrance Day ceremonies.



A young girl prepares to place a wreath of remembrance on the cenotaph during the Consecon Remembrance Day ceremonies. Photo by Amanda Paulhus



Photo by Andrew Lahodyskyj

The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa parade during Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ottawa. An estimated 50,000 people were in attendance, exceeding last year's estimates by 15,000.

Lest we forget



Photo by Franki Ikeman

Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal Princess Anne walks past the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on her way to the podium during the Remembrance Day ceremony at the National War Memorial in Ottawa.



Photo James Paddle-Grant

A veteran of Canada's recent deployments looks on during ceremonies in Ottawa.



Photo by James Paddle-Grant

Continuing a modern tradition, those attending Remembrance Day ceremonies at the National War Memorial in Ottawa lay their poppies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Photo by Franki Ikeman

Jim Newell (left) and John R. Newell Sr. (no relation) chat while they wait for the Remembrance Day ceremonies to begin at the National War Memorial in Ottawa.



Photo by Thomas Surian

Pam Wedd (left) instructs Nick Devlin on the art of canoe restoration. They are repairing Devlin's 60-year-old cedar canoe. This was the second day of the week-long restoration project.

Sharing the art of canoe making

By Thomas Surian

Nestled amid the balsam furs of Northern Ontario sits a barn. Light radiates from the windows, spilling out into the snowy November evening.

The barn is littered with tools and bits of wood. The smell of fresh cut cedar and varnish fills the air. Sounds of sandpaper scratching the sides of a canoe, are accompanied by the ever-present hiss of the river that flows behind the barn.

The warmth of a wood stove and the sound of 1960 blues are reminiscent of a different time.

Pam Wedd sits hunched over a decrepit-looking canoe, manhandling a long

piece of wood that will become part of the gunwale.

Wedd has been building cedar canvas-covered canoes since 1989. She was introduced to canoeing as a kid while at summer camp.

"My interest in canoes goes way back, sometimes in my previous life I wonder if I was a serious paddler."

After falling in love with canoes, she spent over 20 years working at summer camps as a guide, taking young campers on canoe trips into the wilderness.

Webb and her partner Jane live on a 45-acre farm, on which sits a modest wood house surrounded by vegetable gardens and beehives. The house is located

atop a hill overlooking their barn and the Seguin River.

"The property that we're at here, just outside of Parry Sound, is a beautiful piece of property. We're on the Seguin River. We bought the place in 1990."

With the help of a government grant, she turned the old barn into a canoe-building shop. It took close to \$40,000 to get her operation up and running. Soon after moving into her new shop, she discovered her interest in sharing her trade with others. Pam began holding classes on canoe building and repair and continues to teach people canoe building full-time to this day.

People come from across North Amer-

ica to learn from Wedd. The class is usually about a week long. Some people come to repair an old boat that may hold sentimental value, others want to build one from scratch.

For many, the week spent working in a barn in the woods is their vacation for the year.

"I think it's important that we keep the tradition of wooden canoes going and the skills to keep them going. I'm afraid that as we all get older, there won't be the people there that are still building them and so the more I can share the knowledge, the better."

In 2010, Wedd was asked by the Canadian government to hold a workshop on canoe building at the G8 summit in To-

ronto. While the world leaders were in the Muskokas, she was at the Royal York Hotel with their spouses, building a canoe.

She has the boat they built hanging from her ceiling for safe keeping. She said it will never see water, and wishes that she had them sign it.

After 28 years, Wedd is starting to slow down her operation. "I want to have time for other stuff. I want to have more time to paddle, there's never enough time to paddle, more time to garden, and more time to fix my house. And then who knows what?"

"Every day is a treat. I feel blessed that I live in such a wonderful place and do such a wonderful thing."

Share your old coats; help others keep warm

By Amanda Cheung

The Salvation Army has been serving the Belleville community for over 130 years.

As temperatures fall, the Salvation Army has partnered with Parsons Cleaners for the Coats for Folks program.

It runs every Friday in November from 1-3pm and people in need of a jacket can come into the Salvation Army on Pinnacle St. and find a jacket.

"The jackets are given away free of charge," says Abigail Mills, the Belleville Salvation Army Commu-

nity Service Director. "People only need to bring ID."

Mills explains that if you are a mom who needs a jacket for you and your family, you only need to show their IDs and you would be able to leave with jackets for the whole family.

The Salvation Army relies on the community of Belleville to drop off their old, gently worn coats to Parsons Cleaners.

"To date, I think I have picked up about 125 coats from Parsons," says Marlene Johnston, the Family Service Associate at the Salvation Army.

"And that's not near enough because all the 100 coats were given out last week so I got 30 sitting down there for this Friday, so we need a lot more."

Generally, the program is in need of adult men's and women's jacket in large sizes.

Aside from the Coats for Folks program, the Salvation Army also provides food services like the lunch room, warm room, and emergency food bank.

"Our lunch room serves on average 110 people," says Johnston.

Lunch Room provides free food for those who are

hungry or a time of fellowship for those seeking friends.

Similar to Lunch Room is Warm Room, which serves dinner nightly but starts November 15 til March 15.

The Emergency Food Bank is available to low-income families. As well, clothing vouchers and household necessities are available from the Salvation Army Thrift Store to those in need.

"The hardest part of our job is saying no," says Mills, agreeing with Johnston. "We always want to be able to help and serve those in the community."

Year of Sport 2015 promoted at Loyalist

By Nathan Zbeetnoff

Minister of State for Sport Bal Gosal visited Loyalist College Friday to speak with journalism students and promote 2015 as Year of Sport.

"You know this was proclaimed because next year is going to be the biggest sporting year in Canada," said Gosal.

On Oct. 17 the governor general proclaimed that 2015 would be sport of the year for the first time ever.

Gosal mentioned that Ontario has not have any major events held in the province since the 1930s, which was when the British Empire games were held in Hamilton. Those were the largest multisport games ever held in Ontario. The reason that Ontario doesn't hold many major sporting events, is because it is lacking the facilities, the minister said.

"It's something we should have," Gosal said.

Ontario is 40 per cent of the population in Canada and on average the contribution to athletes and sports overall is 25 per cent, he said.

The last three sport budgets have not been touched, Gosal added. Certain provinces don't spend any money on sports. Gosal said that he is attempting to talk to sport administrators and premiers that sports should be attached to education and be mandatory. Manitoba is the only province where it is mandatory to have physical education from junior kindergarten to Grade 12.

"No other province has that," Gosal said.

Gosal is responsible for overseeing a sports budget of \$200 million for Canada. One of the funding methods Gosal has is for an assistance program for high performance athletes once they're called by the national sports organization.

"We spend about \$27 million on that," Gosal said.

Gosal is responsible for 53 national



Photo by Nathan Zbeetnoff

Kathleen Bazkur (left), acting Dean of Media, journalism professor Mary Jollimore and Bal Gosal, minister of state sport visited Loyalist College in Belleville last Friday. Gosal spoke with the journalism students and answered their questions about sports.

sports organizations. For the organizations to receive funding, they have to apply every year under certain criteria and

funding is then approved if accepted.

"The federal government is spending \$500 million towards the infra-

structure and legacy of sports, so we're building facilities in Ontario," Gosal said.

War...

Continued from Page 1

RCAF veteran tells story from Second World War

Eventually, Robertson found help from people who were living nearby. They took him to a farm where he was interrogated and given a test to determine whether or not he was an infiltrator. Luckily, he passed.

"I sometimes tell teachers this is a great way to give tests. If you don't pass, you're shot," he jokes.

Robertson spent about four months hiding in the farmhouse, which has since then been turned into a restaurant. There is a plaque honoring the Royal Canadian Air Force, as well as those who helped them escape the enemy.

Robertson and his family have planned a trip in May to see the plaque as well as dine at the farmhouse turned restaurant that once gave him shelter.

Robertson spent three years serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force. After he was given leave, he returned home to his family. Robertson had post-traumatic stress disorder but did not realize. Everytime he heard a loud sound, it would startle him.

Robertson speaks of one incident where the milkman came by his house and dropped the milk crate by accident. The sound caused him to run out the back door of his house. His father ran after him and said, "It's alright son. It's over!"