

In memoriam

En mémoire de



Col (Ret'd) Murray Johnston, MSM, CD  
19 May 1933 – 20 October 2020  
19 mai 1933 – 20 octobre 2020



RCME Col Cmdt 1991 – 2004  
Col Cmdt du GEMRC 1991 – 2004

This book is a collection of stories and photos from members (past and present) of the RCME Corps whose lives, in one way or another, were influenced by Col (Ret'd) Murray Johnston.

Ce livre est une collection d'histoires et de photos des membres (passés et actuels) du Corps du GEMRC dont la vie, d'une manière ou d'une autre, a été influencée par le colonel (retraité) Murray Johnston.

Un extraordinaire soldat du GEMRC est tombé. Il s'est battu toute sa vie, et jusqu'à la fin, sur le champ de bataille de la fierté, du professionnalisme et de la reconnaissance. Son arme de prédilection aura été notre histoire régimentaire; histoire qu'il aura mise en mot dans son livre. Au-delà d'être des professionnels techniques, il nous a fait réaliser que nous sommes issus d'un héritage dont nous pouvons être fiers et dont nous avons la responsabilité de faire perdurer. Il nous a aussi fait comprendre que le Corps était un régiment composé de très petites unités partout, car sa force avait sa source dans le talent et l'énergie des techniciens et ingénieurs qui la composent. C'est pour cela qu'il a passé sa vie à reconnaître la contribution et mettre en lumière les petits exploits de ceux et celles qui travaillent dans l'ombre, tous les jours. Il aura été la voix la plus forte et le plus grand admirateur de nos techniciens et ingénieurs. Je n'oublierais jamais cet homme dont l'âge et la forme physique n'ont jamais été un obstacle à son enthousiasme et sa détermination à rencontrer et discuter avec nos soldats, quel que soit l'endroit dans le monde, les conditions et le moment.

Merci Colonel Murray. Votre lumière s'est éteinte, mais votre héritage vivra pour longtemps au sein de ce Corps et de ses soldats que vous avez tant aimés. ARTE et MARTE

MGen (Ret'd) Nicolas Eldaoud

JOAN MY DEEP AND SINCERE SYMPATHIES AND CONDOLENCES TO YOU AND  
YOUR FAMILY ON MURRAY'S PASSING

Murray's legacy is remarkable and unparalleled. He leaves a substantial vacuum for his leadership and dedication to the Corps were notable and celebrated.

Indeed, it can be said that Murray personified all that the Corps exemplifies and indelibly put RCME on the map!

His book CANADA'S CRAFTSMEN AT 50! and plethora of publications served both to preserve the Corps' proud history and heritage and to articulate the Corps achievements.

Murray's strong sense of family, both in his personal life and that in the Corps, was ever conspicuous and defined him as an officer and a gentleman extraordinaire as did his humility and humanity.

With the craftsmen and women, all of whom he valued and respected immensely, he enjoyed an affectionate and avuncular relationship, their Uncle Murray.

He was, and will continue to be, an inspiration to all and will be sorely missed.

Respectfully and sincerely

Colonel (Ret'd) Andrew Nellestyn

Murray was a Captain and 2IC of 4 Fd Wksp when I arrived in Soest from Camp Shilo as a green lieutenant in mid 1965. He set a good example for all us junior officers, and served the RCEME Corps for many years after he left the Army. He was unique, and will be missed.

Jim Hanson

Murray will be missed. A leader and trailblazer like him are few and far apart.

Gilles Nappert

Col Johnston is the single most influential RCME Leader of my Generation, he has brought this Branch (Corps) to new heights. Words cannot explain how genuine his interest for all of our RCME Members were. He could re-tell stories from all around the country in the most intricate details and interesting ways and always highlighted the technicians work in those locations and remembered all of their names (an incredible memory).

He has brought the feelings to us of a true family of a family (brother and sisters) of the RCME and documented much of it in great publications.

He will be missed by us all, but is leaving an unforgettable legacy for generations to enjoy.

Arte et Marte – By Skills and by fighting – Par l'adresse et le combat

Gilles Godbout

The admiration I had for this man is unreal. He taught me Esprit de Corps, when I thought I knew it. He taught me how to be a leader, by remembering every detail about his troops as Col Comt and lastly, he would not leave my side on the 3 hour drive in Eritrea, Africa, in my Bison MRT, to go in an air conditioned vehicle..... just because he wanted to talk to me over the headset. He has left a mark on me and numerous other Craftsmen. RIP, Sir! See you on the other side at the stand easy, my Friend.

Randy Titus



This is indeed a significant loss for the Corps. His contributions are legendary and his legacy will forever be felt and remembered. He mentored, motivated and instilled pride and esprit de Corps in everyone he met. One of my proudest moments was receiving a signed copy of his book Canada's Craftmen at 50 at the RCEME JR Muise Hockey tournament in the early 90's as being chosen by him as the MVP of the game... and for those that know me that was not because I was a great hockey player... he saw the pride and esprit de Corps in me as well as teamwork. We had a few pints in the dressing room and a few good laughs. He was always so close to the troops. Rest easy Sir, your spirit lives on in all of us.

CWO Kevin Northorp, Corps SM

He never forgot the name of anyone he shook hands with. He was the epitome of leadership by example. He always said "work hard, and play hard". When he did his nation wide tour in '94 I was in Suffield. We had a procession pick him up from barracks in S1s. He had choices of vehicles, one being the Wrecker and I can tell you he was up and into the passenger seat of that truck faster than most Craftsmen could do it. His smile in this picture brings tears to my eyes. Thank you for your example sir. May god bless you now as you are surely by his side. Arte et Marte!

Rod Berscheid



Col Johnston during a visit to Bosnia 1996. Photo submitted by WO Nathalie Jacques.



Col Johnston during a visit to Bosnia 1996. Photo submitted by WO Nathalie Jacques.



Photo submitted by Dan Rector





Photo submitted by MWO Marc Latour

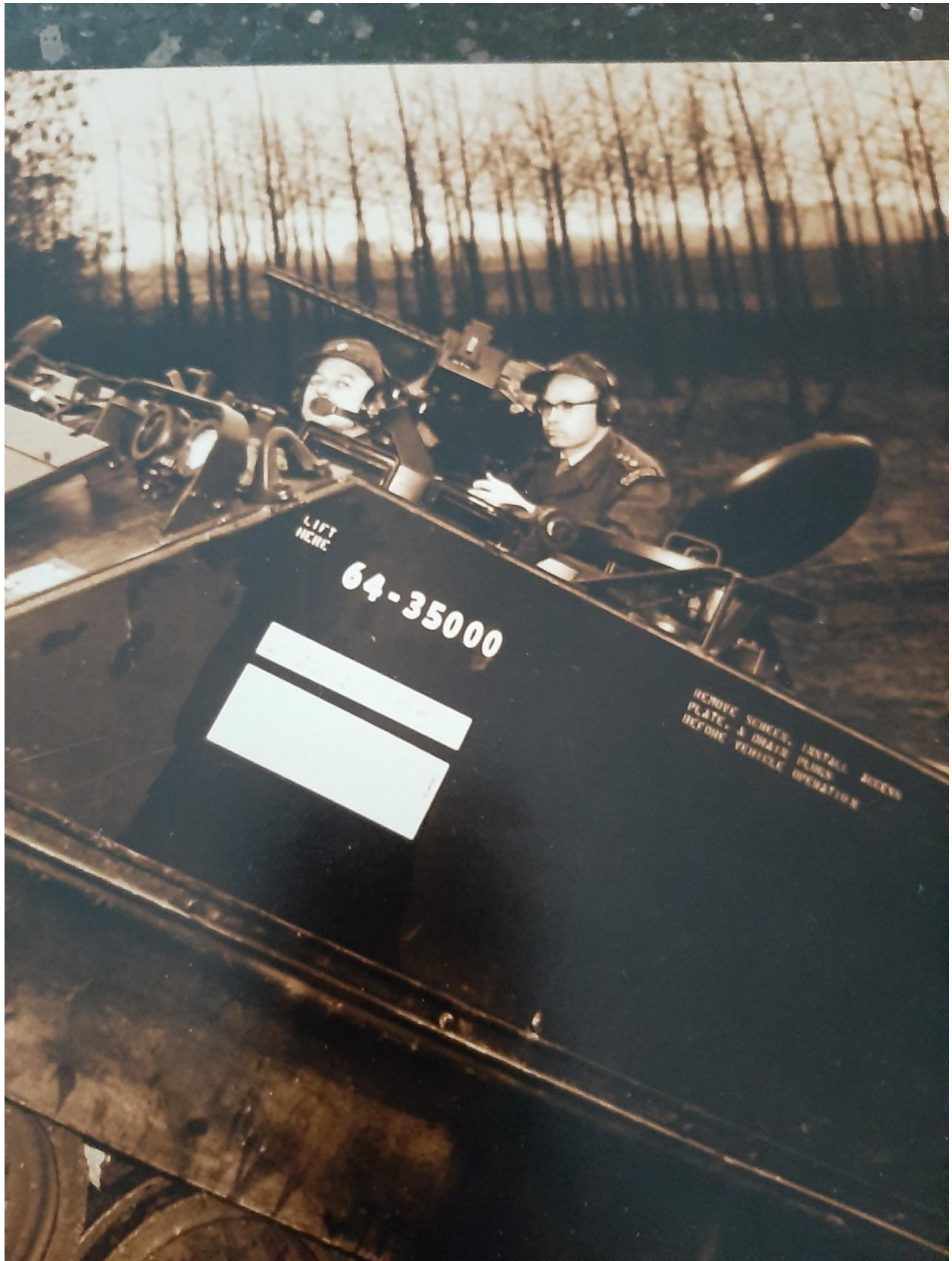


Photo submitted by MWO Marc Latour



Photo submitted by MWO Marc Latour



I was in afghanistan in 2003 on OP Athena ROTO 0 with the NSE. We were visited by Col Johnston and CWO Vass, then the EME branch Chief. I remember Col Johnston being very excited to hear that Camp Julien was relying on RCEME soldiers to perform gate guard and camp security duties. He asked for permission to join us on the gate that night during our shift, because he had to be out there with, as he called us, "Canada's Fightin' Craftsmen".

I've always treasured the memories of that visit. Driving the Col and CWO around the camp in an Iltis to do a perimeter check, hearing him talk to all of us in turn, and for those brief few seconds of face time, having Col Johnston treat you like you were the most important person in the world.

I was amazed by his memory, and how, in one instance of being the first time ever meeting a soldier, he recognized the last name, and remembered meeting that soldier's Father on deployment in the 70s.

Please find a few photos attached from our photo CD that was created during ROTO 0. Credit for the photos goes to the NSE Maint Coy, as we used multiple photographers throughout. Some photos are from a bbq we held that day to celebrate their visit, and the photos at night are of their visit to the camp.

Of Note: The green ICE jacket that Col Johnston is wearing in these photographs is hanging proudly in the New School Headquarters (bldg S-165, Borden) Heritage displays.

If there is anything else I can do to help in the remembrance of Col Johnston, please let me know.

Frederic Gagnon, MWO (Master Gunner), MMM, CD.



Photo submitted by MWO Frederic Gagnon



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Col Johnston in the Golan Heights 1999. Photo submitted by Kevin Loseth

Col Murray Johnston was one of the officers who served with the Canadian Delegation to the International Commission of Control and Supervision (CANDEL ICCS) in Vietnam in 1973. CANDEL ICCS senior leadership was Ambassador Michel Gauvin and MGen Duncan McAlpine. Col Johnston was Commander of Region Seven based in Can Tho from Feb to Jul 73.

The CANDEL ICCS Association was created on our return to Canada in 1973 and Col Johnston attended most of the annual reunions held in Ottawa from 1974 until 2019.

LCol (Ret'd) Fletcher Thomson





2008 Col Murray and Joan Johnston with Maj (ret) Derek Grant (L) and Maj (ret) Dick Malott (R) Sec-Treas CANDEL ICCS Association. Photo submitted by LCol (Ret'd) Fletcher Thomson



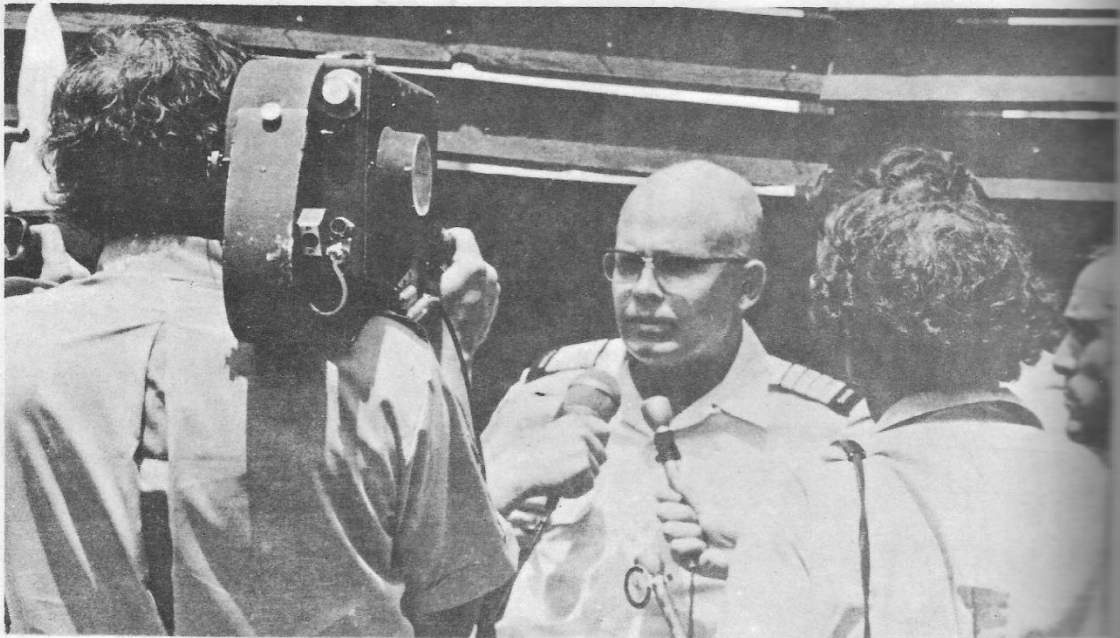
2018 Col Murray and Joan Johnston with LCol (ret) Fred Chapman RCEME. Photo submitted by LCol (Ret'd) Fletcher Thomson

## REGION SEVEN

The first group of ICCS Canadians arrived in Can Tho on 5 February and were followed by team members between 21 - 23 February.

Because of the large number of incidents reported in this region, no one could complain of lack of work. With the increase in workload came an ever increasing presence of members of the international press corps, culminating in the visit by External Affairs Minister, Mitchell Sharp, on 17 March, when almost 30 newspaper, radio and television reporters descended on Can Tho and were given a true-to-life description of a typical ICCS region by Colonel M.C. Johnson and Major R.V. Roe.

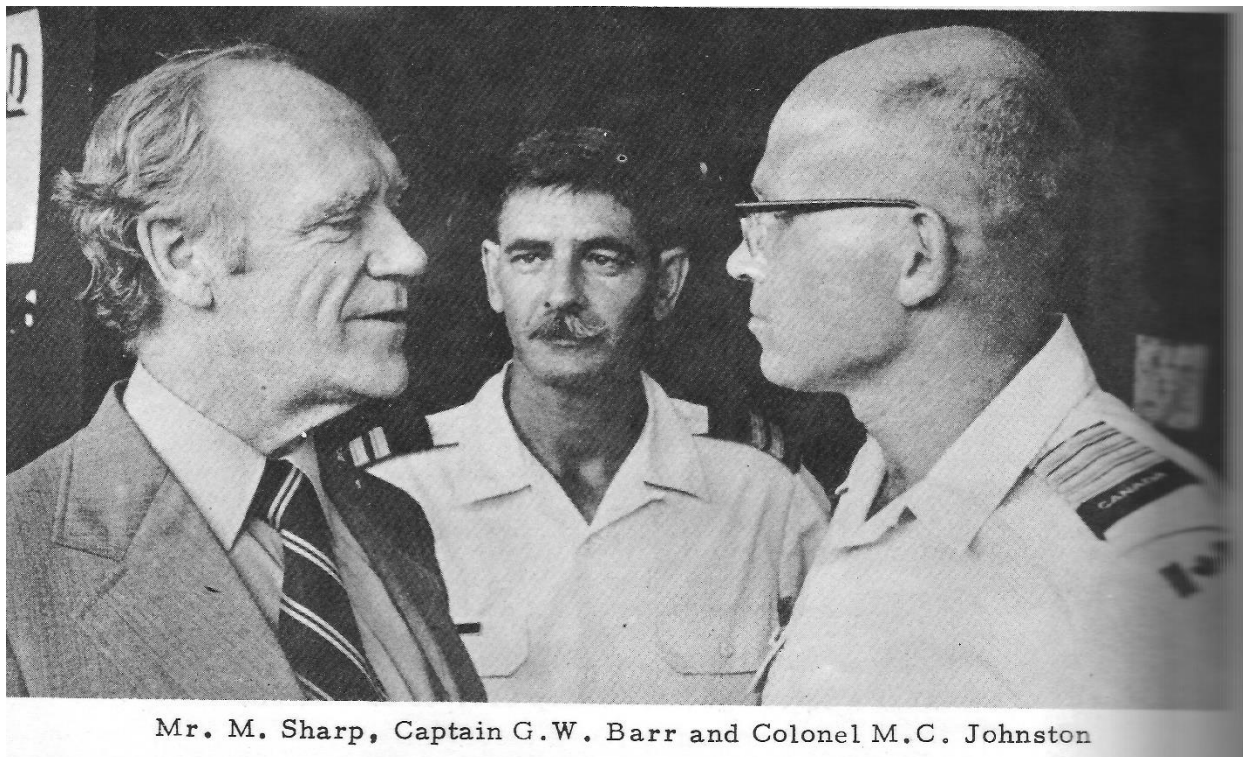
Results of investigations have produced some unique findings. For example, bridges blowdown, not up and the vast majority of truce violations are committed by bandits. Findings such as these, however, did not dampen Canadian enthusiasm.



Colonel M.C. Johnston

On 17 March 1973 External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp in Can Tho with Col Johnston. Photo from the album that was produced at the end of our tour in Vietnam and was distributed in July 1973. Photo submitted by LCol (Ret'd) Fletcher Thomson





Mr. M. Sharp, Captain G.W. Barr and Colonel M.C. Johnston

On 17 March 1973 External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp in Can Tho with Col Johnston. Photo from the album that was produced at the end of our tour in Vietnam and was distributed in July 1973. Photo submitted by LCol (Ret'd) Fletcher Thomson



Photo submitted by MCpl Trevor Normington



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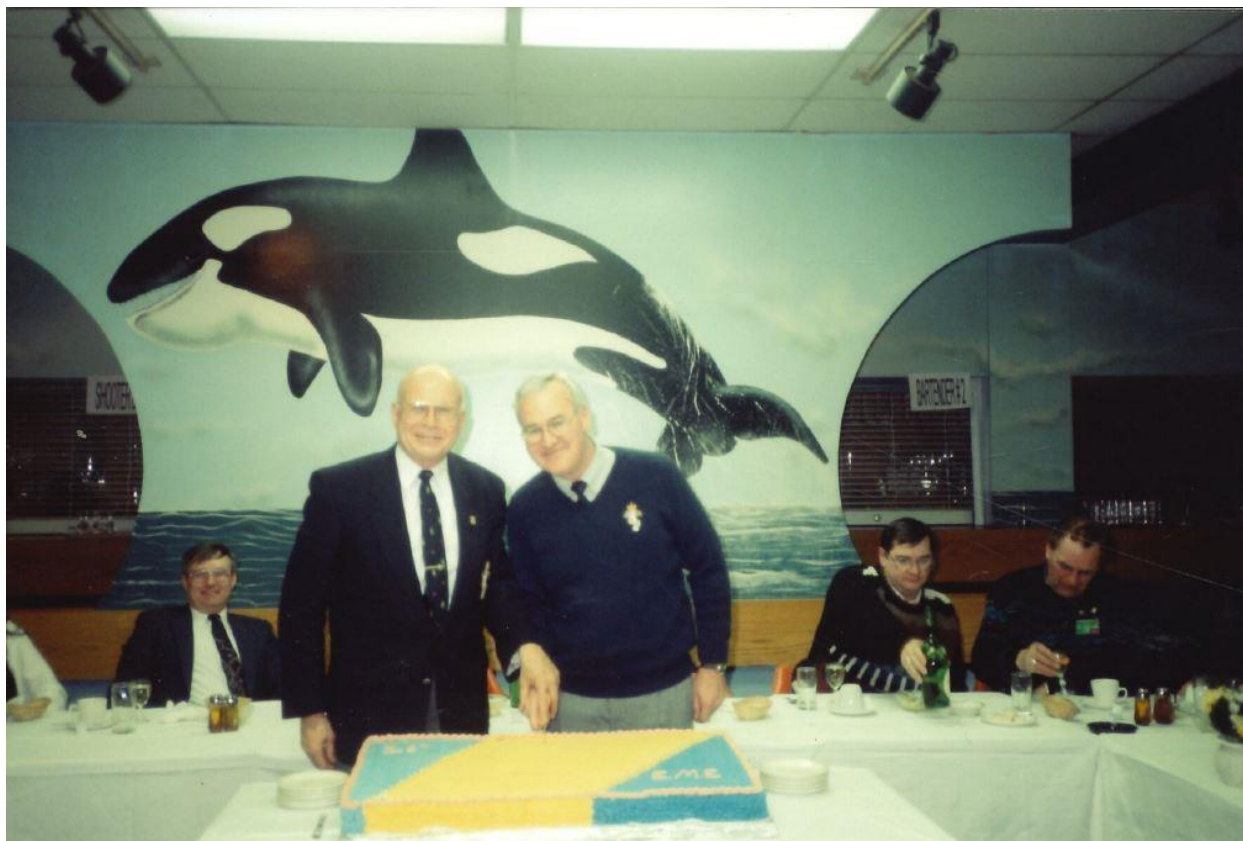


Photo submitted by MCpl Trevor Normington



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Photo submitted by MCpl Trevor Normington





Photo submitted by MCpl Trevor Normington



Photo submitted by Matthew Plourde



Col Murray Johnston, WO Trevor "Trapper" Allen MM CD, Major Bob Eddy OC Maint 2004.  
Photo submitted by MCpl Trevor Normington





Col Johnston with the RMC current and graduate students that walked Nijmegen 2005. Photo submitted by Major Jean-Francois Briand



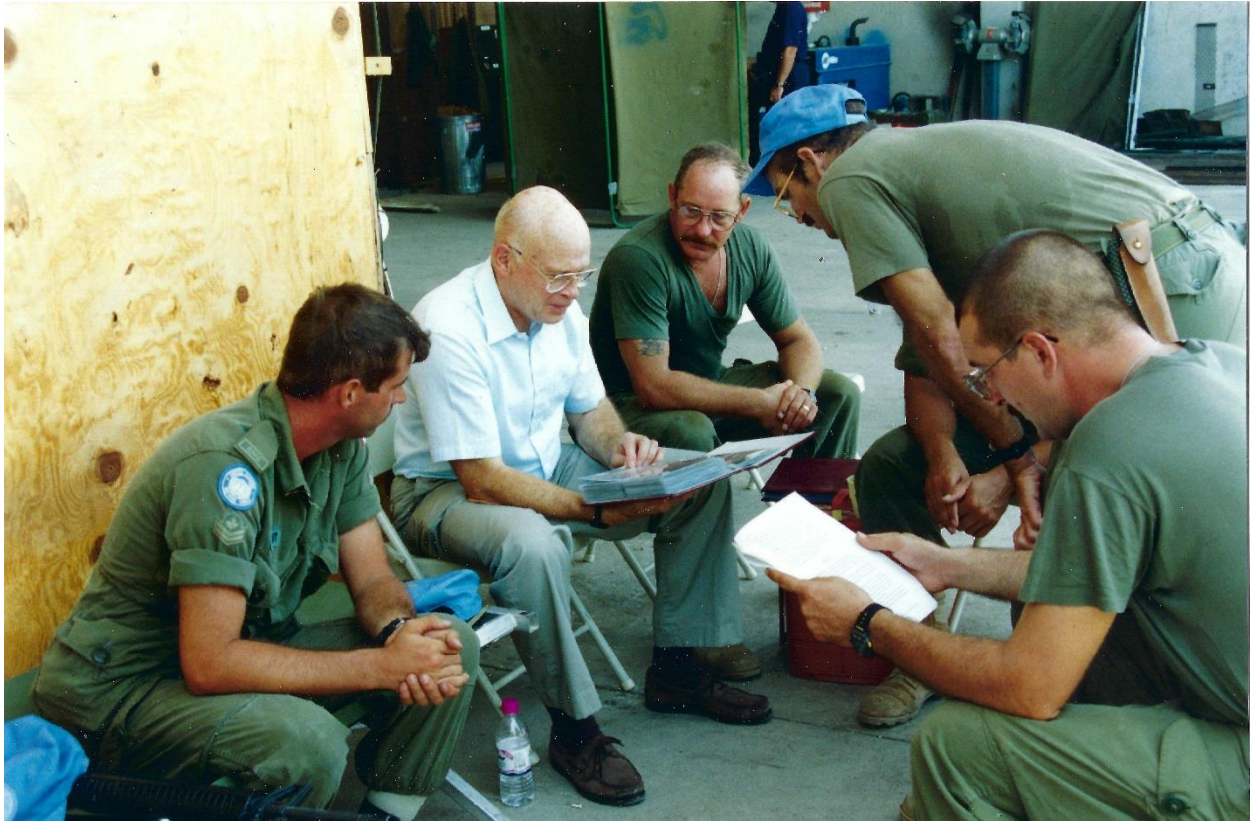


Standing proud at the front of the parade with The Hon Sen. Day. Photo submitted by Major Jean-Francois Briand



2005 Nijmegen Marches Front of the Parade. Photo submitted by Major Jean-Francois Briand





Photograph was taken while Col Johnston visited the Canadian Contingent United Nations Mission in Haiti, Roto 0 in the summer of 1995. The photos are taken on the airfield in Port au Prince, in front of the Maintenance Platoon Control Office and with his RCEME escorts in front of his "staff car". Photo submitted by Maj Elisabeth McCarthy



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