



## **CANADA 150 SERVICEWOMEN'S SALUTE COMMEMORATION**

### **"A SALUTE TO SERVICEWOMEN"**

**BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL (RET'D) SUSAN BEHARRIELL OMM CD**

**(The article shown here is an adapted version of a Canada 150 SWS storyline prepared by LCol (ret'd) Beharriell in celebration of both Canada 125 and Canada 150 Servicewomen's Salute Dinners. Excerpts of short stories submitted in advance by attendees at the two Dinners, twenty-five years apart, are shown in blue here.)**

**ON OCTOBER 8TH, 1992 A VERY SPECIAL DINNER WAS HELD IN THE WEST BLOCK CONFEDERATION ROOM ON PARLIAMENT HILL. TODAY, IT IS PARLIAMENT'S TEMPORARY HOUSE OF COMMONS WHILE CENTRE BLOCK RENOVATIONS PROGRESS.**

**OCTOBER 8, 1992 WAS THE FIRST "CANADA 125 SERVICEWOMEN'S SALUTE DINNER" THAT ALSO COINCIDED WITH THE UNVEILING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPERS' MONUMENT IN OTTAWA. THREE MEN AND 305 WOMEN – VETERANS, CADETS, RESERVISTS, RETIRED AND REGULAR SERVICEWOMEN – CAME TOGETHER FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO ATTEND THE DINNER. WHAT FOLLOWS IS A CONDENSED VERSION OF THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS I GAVE. I EXAMINED THE EARLY HISTORY OF WOMEN IN CANADA'S MILITARY AND ASKED ATTENDEES TO MAIL-IN LETTERS DESCRIBING SOMETHING OF THEIR OWN CAREERS TO BE SHARED THAT EVENING. MY PRESENTATION TELLS THE STORIES OF THE WOMEN IN THE ROOM THAT NIGHT, INCLUDING THEIR STORIES BEGINNING IN WWII.**



## **ACT ONE – SERVICEWOMEN’S SALUTE CANADA 125 1885-1992**

**ON MAY 26 1885, SEVEN YOUNG NURSES WAVED GOOD-BYE FROM THE WINDOWS OF A STEAM TRAIN AS IT SLOWLY CHUGGED OUT OF TORONTO’S UNION STATION. LITTLE DID THEY KNOW WHAT LAY IN STORE FOR THEM AS PART OF CANADA’S RESPONSE TO THE NORTHWEST REBELLION IN THE INDIAN TERRITORIES. LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT THEY WOULD BE PART OF THE BATTLE THAT MARKED THE FIRST USE OF THE MACHINE GUN BY CANADIAN TROOPS, AND THE LAST USE OF THE BOW AND ARROW IN CONFLICT.**

**THEIRS WAS A VERY DIFFERENT WORLD – A WORLD IN WHICH WOMEN COULD NOT VOTE, COULD NOT BE WELDERS, FORESTERS, OR DOCTORS. NOT EVEN CONSIDERED “PERSONS.” BUT THEIR SENSE OF PATRIOTISM, OF DUTY AND OF ADVENTURE DROVE THEM TO SERVE THEIR NEWLY-CREATED COUNTRY.**

**A TOTAL OF 12 NURSING SISTERS SERVED IN THE FIELD HOSPITALS IN SASKATOON AND MOOSE JAW. THEY WERE AWARDED THE NORTH WEST REBELLION CAMPAIGN MEDAL AND BECAME THE FIRST WOMEN TO SERVE IN CANADA’S MILITARY. NOT IN THEIR WILDEST DREAMS COULD THEY HAVE IMAGINED US CELEBRATING THEIR LEGACY HERE TODAY – 132 YEARS LATER.**



**THE OUTBREAK OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR FOUND CANADA WITH NO ORGANIZED MILITARY SERVICE AT ALL. BUT FOUR NURSES WERE SELECTED AND SOON JOINED THE MEN OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN REGIMENT ON THE VOYAGE TO CAPE TOWN IN OCTOBER 1899. CONDITIONS WERE HARD, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF THE SNAKES AND INFESTATIONS OF BUGS. THE NURSES SOON EASED ONE PROBLEM BY STANDING THE LEGS OF ALL THE BEDS IN LARGE TIN CANS FILLED WITH LIQUID INSECTICIDE.**

**THOSE CANADIAN NURSES WHO SERVED IN WWI AGAIN DEALT WITH DREADFUL LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS INCLUDING DISEASE, RATS, AND LICE. THEY MINISTERED AID TO WOUNDED ALLIED AND ENEMY SOLDIERS. THEY SUCCUMBED TO ILLNESS, WERE WOUNDED OR KILLED IN ENEMY BOMBINGS OF FIELD HOSPITALS. ALTHOUGH THEY WERE NOT IN THE TRENCHES, THE NURSES DID HAVE TO PLOW THEIR WAY THROUGH THE DEEP, STICKY MUD. AND AFTER A BATTLE OF RED TAPE, THEIR UNIFORMS WERE FINALLY SUPPLEMENTED WITH SHORTER SKIRTS, GUM BOOTS, WATERPROOF HATS AND RAINCOATS.**

**BETWEEN 1914 AND 1918, SOME 2,800 CANADIAN NURSES SERVED WITH DISTINCTION OVERSEAS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THESE NURSING SISTERS WERE ALSO THE FIRST CANADIAN WOMEN TO VOTE ON DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup> IN ADVANCE OF THE DECEMBER 19, 1917 FEDERAL ELECTION THAT**



**SECURED THE FIRST FULL SUFFRAGE FOR CANADIAN WOMEN. THEIR NOBLE SERVICE IS COMMEMORATED IN THE NURSING SISTERS' MEMORIAL LOCATED IN THE CENTRE BLOCK OF PARLIAMENT HILL. AND THE FIRST CANADIAN SERVICEWOMAN EVER TO DIE BECAUSE OF ENEMY FIRE ON MAY 19, 1918 - NURSING SISTER KATHERINE MACDONALD - IS ONE OF SEVEN COMMEMORATIVE STATUES AT THE BRANT COUNTY MEMORIAL IN HER HOMETOWN OF BRANTFORD ONTARIO.**

**AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> WORLD WAR IT WAS QUITE UNUSUAL FOR CANADIAN WOMEN TO TRAVEL ALONE. YET THE RECRUITING POSTERS WERE HARDLY UP WHEN WOMEN OF ALL AGES, FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, LEFT PRAIRIE TOWNS, FISHING VILLAGES, FARMS AND CITIES AND TRAVELED BY TRAIN TO SIGN UP.**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THEIR STORIES BY SERVICEWOMEN VETERANS HERE TONIGHT.**

***“A LOT OF THE RULES WERE PRETTY SILLY. MEN COULD DRINK BEER IN THEIR CANTEEN. WOMEN COULD NOT. OF COURSE WE MANAGED TO GET AROUND THAT RULE QUITE OFTEN. WE WOULD SNEAK OUT AT NIGHT AND GET SOME BEER FROM THE FLIGHT SERGEANT IN CHARGE***



*OF THE MEN'S CANTEEN. THEN WE'D STORE THE BOTTLES IN THE TOILET TANKS IN OUR BARRACKS. THEY KEPT BEAUTIFULLY COLD THERE. THE ONLY TROUBLE WAS THAT, ONCE IN A WHILE, THE LABELS WOULD SOAK OFF AND PLUG UP THE TOILET."*

*"WE WERE ASLEEP IN OUR CABIN WHEN THE TORPEDO HIT. IT WAS TERRIBLY DARK, BUT WE MANAGED TO GRAB OUR LIFE JACKETS AND GET UP ON DECK. THE LAST LIFEBOAT WAS GONE. THE SHIP WAS SINKING – AND WE WERE WASHED OVERBOARD! WE WERE IN THE WATER FOR HOURS, DRESSED IN OUR PAJAMAS AND BURBERRYS. WE HAD NOTHING ON OUR FEET.*

*AN OVERTURNED LIFEBOAT DRIFTED BY AND ABOUT A DOZEN MEN AND WOMEN MANAGED TO HANG ONTO IT. IN THE MORNING, THERE WERE ONLY THREE OF US LEFT. IT WAS DAYBREAK WHEN WE WERE PICKED UP, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT THE RESCUE."*

*"THERE WERE 17,000 PEOPLE ON BOARD THE QUEEN MARY ON OUR WAY OVERSEAS. ABOUT HALF-WAY ACROSS, THEY TOLD US THAT THERE WAS ROOM FOR 3,000 IN THE LIFEBOATS. BUT WE HAD COME*



*WELL PREPARED FOR THE VOYAGE. WE HAD FILLED OUR WATER BOTTLES WITH SCOTCH.”*

*“I DID FIRE-WARDEN DUTY UP ON THE ROOF ON OUR HOUSE IN LONDON. IT WAS RATHER FRIGHTENING IN A WAY, BUT WHEN YOU’RE YOUNG YOU DON’T REALLY SEE THE DANGER. WE FOUND IT ALL RATHER EXCITING. FROM THE ROOF YOU COULD SEE THE V-1S SCOOT ACROSS THE SKY. WE CALLED THEM ‘BUZZ BOMBS.’ YOU’D SEE FLAME SPURTING OUT THE BACK AND YOU’D THINK GOOD, IT’S GONE BY. THEN IT WOULD CIRCLE AND SOMETIMES IT WOULD COME BACK.”*

**ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1941, TWO CANADIAN NURSING SISTERS WERE TAKEN PRISONER FOLLOWING THE FALL OF HONG KONG. AFTER ALMOST TWO YEARS IN CAPTIVITY IN A JAPANESE POW CAMP FOR CIVILIAN [CHINESE] PRISONERS, LT N/S KAY CHRISTIE AND LT N/S ANNA MAY WATERS WERE RELEASED. BEFORE THEY LEFT, MANY CAPTURED WOMEN GAVE THEM THE ADDRESSES OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND ASKED THEM TO GET WORD TO THEM. BUT THE JAPANESE WOULD NOT ALLOW THEM TO TAKE OUT ANYTHING WRITTEN. SO LT N/S KAY CHRISTIE AND LT N/S ANNA MAY**



**WATERS MEMORIZED THOSE DOZENS OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES AND WROTE TO EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM.**

**WE ARE HONOURED TO MEET THE WWII SERVICEWOMEN HERE TONIGHT. YOU WERE SIGNALERS, MOTOR MECHANICS, ACK-ACK BATTERY PLOTTERS AND POSTAL CLERKS. YOU WATCHED RADAR SCREENS ON THE WEST COAST LOOKING FOR ENEMY BALLOONS CARRYING EXPLOSIVES. YOU LEARNED JAPANESE MORSE CODE AND INTERCEPTED CODED GERMAN U-BOAT MESSAGES. YOU WERE PART OF THE NAVY SHOW AND YOU TOOK PART IN VE-DAY CELEBRATIONS IN FRONT OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE.**

**BY THE END OF WW II, NEARLY 50,000 WOMEN HAD SERVED IN CANADA'S MILITARY. THEY SERVED SO MEN COULD FIGHT. AND IN SO DOING, THEY PROVED THAT WOMEN WERE CAPABLE OF MUCH MORE THAN TRADITION AND MEN HAD EVER THOUGHT.**

**WE ALL HAVE STORIES ABOUT BASIC TRAINING. BUT THOSE OF US IN THE 1970S WHO WERE THE FIRST TO COMPLETE THE SAME BASIC TRAINING AS THE MEN – NCMS AND OFFICERS – HAD SPECIAL CHALLENGES.**



**THE FIRST SUCH CLASS OF WOMEN OUT OF “BOOT CAMP” AT CFB  
CORNWALLIS CERTAINLY LEFT THEIR MARK.**

*“WE WERE TOLD THAT IT WAS PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR WOMEN TO “CHANGE ARMS” ON THE MARCH. THE MALE DRILL STAFF HAD DECIDED THAT: “BREASTS WOULD NOT ALLOW THE RIFLE TO PASS UNRESTRICTED IN FRONT OF THE BODY”. SO WE WOMEN WERE FORBIDDEN TO DO THIS MOVEMENT. WELL, WE PRACTISED AT NIGHT IN SECRET AND JUST SHOWED UP ON THE PARADE SQUARE ONE DAY AND DID THE MOVEMENT PERFECTLY – MUCH TO THE CHAGRIN OF THE MALE DRILL STAFF.”*

*“I JOINED THE CF IN 1970, THE ONLY JOB THAT DIRECT ENTRY WOMEN WERE ALLOWED TO DO WAS SERVE AS PERSONNEL ADMIN OFFICERS. THE BASE COMMANDER PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THAT WE WOMEN WOULD ALL MARRY WITHIN 5 YEARS AND LEAVE THE MILITARY, SO WHAT WAS THE USE OF TRAINING US AT ALL? LATER IN THE MID 1990’S, I WAS THE DIRECTOR OF THE CREW TRIALS AND MOST OF OUR TEAM OF NINE HAD SERVED WITH DISTINCTION FOR 35 YEARS WITH HUSBANDS AND FAMILIES!”*





*“I WAS THE FIRST WOMAN TO BE ENROLLED IN 1972 UNDER THE REGULAR OFFICERS’ TRAINING PLAN (ROTP). BASIC TRAINING THAT SUMMER LEFT A LOT TO BE DESIRED. I HAD JOINED TO FIGHT FOR MY COUNTRY. HOW COULD WE POSSIBLY BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY AS OFFICERS IF WE DID NOT HAVE THE SAME CHALLENGES AND STANDARDS AS MEN? I AM HAPPY TO SAY THE CRITICAL FEEDBACK WE PROVIDED LED TO BIG CHANGES IN FUTURE COURSES.”*

*“WHEN I WAS ACCEPTED AS THE FIRST WOMAN IN THE INTELLIGENCE BRANCH, THE OFFICER TOLD ME RIGHT UP FRONT – WAGGING HIS FINGER IN MY FACE ...“YOU’D BETTER MEASURE UP OR WE’LL NEVER LET ANOTHER WOMAN IN! NO PRESSURE, DEAR.”*

*“LATER, A NEW BOSS RESPONDED TO MY POSTING MESSAGE TO A FIGHTER WING. QUOTE “NO, I WILL NOT ACCEPT A WOMAN ON MY OPERATIONS STAFF” UNQUOTE. NDHQ RE-SENT THE MESSAGE ... PERHAPS HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND... THE RESPONSE THIS TIME WAS “NOT ONLY NO, BUT NO F-ING WAY!” MY BOSS HAD TO BE GIVEN A*



*DIRECT ORDER TO ACCEPT ME. YOU CAN IMAGINE THE WELCOME I RECEIVED.”*

**WE HAVE ALL HAD TO COPE WITH OLD, OUTDATED ATTITUDES AND A SYSTEM RESISTANT TO CHANGE. HOW MANY OF US HAVE HAD ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS WHICH READ IN PART: “HER SUCCESS IN THIS FIELD WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE AFFECTED BY HER SEX. SHE WILL HAVE TO WORK VERY HARD TO OVERCOME THIS HANDICAP.”**

**WHEN THESE THINGS WERE HAPPENING IN THE 70’S AND 80’S, THEY MAY NOT HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED AND UNDERSTOOD AS THEY ARE TODAY. THEY DID NOT EVEN HAVE NAMES. IN THOSE DAYS, HARRASS WAS TWO WORDS! AND DISCRIMINATION WAS OCCURRING ACROSS ALL CANADIAN SOCIETY – NOT JUST IN THE MILITARY. BUT THOSE EXPERIENCES DID FORM US AND REMAIN VIVID EVEN TODAY.**

*“DURING MY CAREER, I HAD TO DEVOTE TIME AND ENERGY TO THINKING ABOUT AND ARMOURING MYSELF FOR COUNTLESS GENDER-DRIVEN ISSUES. MY MALE COLLEAGUES COULD SIMPLY FOCUS ON THEIR WORK AND ADVANCING THEIR CAREERS. THIS HAS*



*BEEN DESCRIBED AS AN ONGOING TAX THAT WOMEN HAVE BEEN FORCED TO PAY. IT IS A METAPHOR I LIKE EVEN THOUGH IT CANNOT FULLY CAPTURE THE SHEER MENTAL EXHAUSTION INVOLVED.”*

*“I WAS CANADA’S VERY FIRST FEMALE SPACE ENGINEER. YES, OUR RMC CLASS, 8 MEN AND ME, WERE KNOWN AS “THE SPACE CADETS”. I RECEIVED SUCH ROUGH TREATMENT FROM THE VERY MALE ENGINEERING WORLD THAT I HAD TO LEAVE THE MILITARY I LOVED. IT STILL HURTS...”*

*“I HAVE FACED DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL HARRASMENT, PHYSICAL ASSAULT, IGNORANCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, PREJUDICE AND MALE CHAUVINISM. TODAY, WERE MEN TO TREAT ME THE SAME AS THEY ONCE DID, THERE WOULD BE COURTS MARSHALL AND CRIMINAL CHARGES!”*

**WE HAVE SO MANY PEOPLE HERE TONIGHT ALSO FROM THOSE TIMES WITH ADDITIONAL SPECIAL STORIES TO TELL. YOU WERE THE FIRST CANADIAN DIETITIAN TO SERVE IN KOREA. YOU WORKED ON THE PRIMROSE LAKE TESTING RANGE IN COLD LAKE, ALBERTA, ALMOST 75 YEARS AGO WHEN**



**THERE WERE NO ROADS. YOU WERE THE FIRST WOMEN TO QUALIFY AS FLIGHT NURSES, THE FIRST AIRCREW, THE FIRST IN YOUR TRADE, THE ONLY WOMAN ON YOUR BASE OR STATION. YOU SERVED SIX-MONTH TOURS IN THE MOST NORTHERN SETTLEMENT ON EARTH AT ALERT. YOU WERE THE FIRST WOMEN TO SERVE AT SEA, THE FIRST TO GRADUATE FROM THE MILITARY COLLEGES AND THE FIRST TO BE APPOINTED TO THE EXALTED POSITION OF REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR. AND YOU'VE SERVED AROUND THE WORLD IN UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS.**

*“MY MAIN TASK WAS TO DELIVER SUPPLIES AND TROOPS INTO THE FIRST DISARMAMENT CAMP IN NICARAGUA. THIS MEANT STAYING IN SANDINISTA CAMPS WITH GUARDS AT THE DOOR AND WALKING ACROSS THE CARPET OF A HOTEL ROOM LISTENING TO THE CRUNCH OF HUGE BEETLES UNDERFOOT. IT MEANT DRIVING FOR 18 HOURS A DAY IN INTENSE JUNGLE HEAT, BOUNCING AROUND ON UNCOMFORTABLE FLAK BLANKETS. IF WE HAD HIT A LAND MINE, WE'D HAVE LOST OUR LEGS – BUT THE BLANKETS WOULD HAVE SAVED OUR BUTTS.”*



*“MY TRAINING HAD NOT PREPARED ME TO STARE DOWN THE BARREL OF A LOADED SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN. VIOLENT ANGRY PROTESTS LIKE THE [1990] OKA CRISIS ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN IN CANADA. THEY HAPPEN HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES. BUT THIS UGLY HATRED TOOK PLACE ONLY A TWO-HOUR DRIVE FROM MY FRONT DOOR. BUT I LEARNED QUICKLY AND I DID MY JOB. THERE CAN BE NO GLORY IN SUCH A MILITARY OPERATION.”*

**CANADIAN SERVICEWOMEN HAVE SERVED AS UN PEACEKEEPERS SINCE 1975. IT IS WITH MUCH PRIDE THAT YOU WEAR YOUR UNITED NATIONS BLUE BERETS. THE CANADIAN PEOPLE CELEBRATE THIS THROUGH THE PEACEKEEPERS’ MONUMENT IN OTTAWA – A MONUMENT WHICH INCLUDES THE FIGURE OF A SERVICEWOMAN.**

**WE TRULY HAVE “COME A LONG WAY BABY.” WE HAVE EARNED A SALUTE TO SERVICEWOMEN – FROM THE NURSES IN THE NORTH WEST REBELLION AND WWI, THE CWACS, WDS AND WRENS WHO SERVED SO MEN COULD FIGHT, TO KOREAN WAR FLIGHT NURSES AND COLD WAR PIONEERS, RESERVE AND REGULAR FORCE, WHO BLAZED NEW ROLES FOR WOMEN, TO THOSE OF US WHO SERVE TODAY AND SHALL SERVE IN THE FUTURE.**



**WE SERVE OUR COUNTRY WITH A DEDICATION, PROFESSIONALISM AND AN ENTHUSIASM SECOND TO NONE. WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

**AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, MANY MORE STORIES COULD HAVE BEEN TOLD BY THE WOMEN IN THE PARLIAMENT HILL'S WEST BLOCK CONFEDERATION ROOM THAT NIGHT, 25 YEARS AGO!**

**WE TRULY STAND ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS AND WE THANK THEM FOR HAVING SHARED THEIR STORIES.**

**SO THAT WAS ACT ONE...A LOOK AT CANADIAN SERVICEWOMEN'S MILITARY SERVICE AND PIONEERING... SPANNING SOME 107 YEARS.**

### **ACT TWO – SERVICEWOMEN'S SALUTE 1993-2017**

**WHAT ARE OUR STORIES FROM THE LAST 25 YEARS?**

**PERHAPS THEY INCLUDE ESTABLISHING THE REALITY OF WOMEN WORKING IN NON-TRADITIONAL ROLES IN THE CANADIAN FORCES. THEY CERTAINLY INCLUDE WOMEN FIGHTING IN COMBAT, AND WORKING, LEADING AND COMMANDING AT ALL LEVELS ACROSS THE ENTIRE FORCE. THERE WAS A GRADUAL ACCEPTANCE THAT WE WOMEN ARE HERE TO STAY, THAT WE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE HERE AND THAT CANADA NEEDS US. THERE WAS ALSO AN AWAKENING UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED TO END DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN THE FORCES.**



**HERE ARE SOME OF THE STORIES YOU SHARED WITH US, THIS TIME IN ONLINE POSTINGS ON THE SERVICEWOMEN'S SALUTE WEBSITE. LET US ONCE MORE SHARE THE PAIN, THE JOYS, THE TRIUMPHS, THE PRIDE AND THE DEDICATION OF CANADA'S SERVICEWOMEN.**

**AS MOST OF YOU SHOULD BE AWARE, A SERIES OF COVER ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE IN 1998 FEATURED THE STORY OF SERVICEWOMEN'S RAPE WHILE SERVING IN THE MILITARY.**

***"DURING MY MILITARY CAREER I HAD THE VERY BEST OF TIMES AND THE VERY WORST OF TIMES OF MY LIFE. I TRIED TO USE MY BAD EXPERIENCE TO HELP ALL PEOPLE IN THE MILITARY BY APPEARING IN THE 1998 MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE ON "RAPE IN THE MILITARY". I DO NOT FEEL LIKE IT DID MUCH GOOD. HOWEVER ... I STILL SERVE CANADA, JUST IN A DIFFERENT WAY. IN SPITE OF MY BAD EXPERIENCES, I AM PROUD TO BE PART OF THE HISTORY OF OUR CANADIAN FORCES."***



**I THINK THAT BRAVE WOMAN IN 1998 DESERVES OUR THANKS! DAWN,  
PLEASE STAND AND ACCEPT IT!**

*“IN 1994, AT THE WAINWRIGHT BATTLE SCHOOL IN ALBERTA, THE BASE WAS CONSIDERED SO UNSAFE THAT A CURFEW WAS IMPOSED ON THE WOMEN RECRUITS WHO WERE LOCKED INSIDE THEIR ALL- FEMALE BARRACKS. SENTRIES PATROLLED INSIDE AND SOLDIERS WITH PICK AXES STOOD GUARD OUTSIDE THE DOORS, SOME OF WHICH WERE SHACKLED SHUT.*

*WELCOME TO THE MILITARY...”*

*“WHEN I FIRST LEARNED OF “OP HONOUR”, I WAS INITIALLY ENTHUSIASTIC. BUT THEN I LEARNED THAT, WITHIN HOURS, THE ENTIRE INITIATIVE HAD BEEN NICKNAMED “HOP ON HER”. COULD THE CAF EVER RID ITSELF OF THESE PROBLEMS?”*

*“FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE MALE LEADERS OF THE RCN, THE ARMY AND THE RCAF HAVE ALL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THEY HAD BEEN LARGELY BLIND TO THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND ASSAULT ON THE WOMEN AND MEN UNDER*





*THEIR COMMAND. THEY FINALLY SEEM COMMITTED TO ELIMINATING THE PROBLEMS.”*

*“WE WISH OUR MILITARY WELL IN ITS EFFORTS. WE KNOW IT WILL TAKE TIME. WE AWAIT THE RESULTS.”*

**I THINK THAT THAT IS ENOUGH OF DEALING WITH THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM! AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE HASHTAG “ME TOO” MOVEMENT AS IT IS NAMED TIME MAGAZINE’S “2017 PERSON OF THE YEAR”. NOW TO MORE STORIES OF SERVICEWOMEN IN THE ROOM TONIGHT AND OUR LATEST HISTORY...**

**YOU EARNED THE HIGH AGGREGATE SCORE OF THE ATLANTIC MILITIA RIFLE TEAM IN 1990 AND YOU WERE THE FIRST RESERVIST WOMAN TO COMPLETE THE INFANTRY SECTION COMMANDER COURSE.**

**YOU WERE IN THE SWINTER TRIALS AND THEN SERVED ON HMCS PROTECTEUR AS ONE OF THE FIRST WOMEN TO “GO TO WAR” AS PART OF A FORWARD DEPLOYED COMBAT UNIT. YOU HAD A GREAT 33 YEARS!**



**YOU WERE POSTED TO THE SPECIAL SERVICE FORCES IN PETAWAWA, TO THE 2 FIELD AMBULANCE UNIT. AND YOU WENT TO RWANDA.**

*“IN SPITE OF KNEE SURGERY, ACTS OF SABOTAGE AND RESISTANCE FROM THE CHAIN OF COMMAND, I WAS THE FIRST WOMAN TO COMPLETE THE SSF MILITARY TRIATHON IRON MAN COMPETITION – QUITE A TEST OF STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE...*

*AND, MUCH AS THEY DID NOT LIKE IT, NO LONGER JUST FOR MEN!”*

**YOU MET THE NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF THOUSANDS OF BOAT PEOPLE, FEDERAL PRISONERS WITH BROKEN JAWS SUFFERED IN A RIOT AND RUSSIAN DUKHOBORS RECOVERING FROM EXTREME FASTS.**

*“BEFORE I LEFT FOR THE PERSIAN GULF, I TELEPHONED MY 95-YEAR-OLD GRANDFATHER, A WW I VETERAN OF PASSCHENDAELE, AND ASKED HIM FOR ADVICE. HE TOLD ME ONLY TO CONCERN MYSELF WITH THOSE THINGS THAT I COULD CONTROL AND NOT TO WASTE ENERGY ON THOSE I COULD NOT. I TOOK HIS ADVICE – AND IT WORKED.”*



*“MY COMBAT EQUIPMENT WAS SPREAD ALL OVER THE LIVING ROOM FLOOR. I WATCHED THE WAR ON TELEVISION AS I PACKED MY KIT FOR MY DEPARTURE THE NEXT DAY.”*

*“THERE IS NO ALARM CLOCK IN THE WORLD WHICH COULD POSSIBLY WORK AS WELL AS THE WORDS OVER THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM: ‘INCOMING SCUD MISSILE - IMPACT IN SIX MINUTES.’ AFTER DONNING OUR ‘BUNNY SUITS’ AND GAS MASKS, WE HAD FIVE MINUTES TO SIT AND CONTEMPLATE OUR FUTURE.”*

*“I WAS WORKING IN THE OPS CENTRE OF NORAD HQ IN CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN, COLORADO SPRINGS ON 9/11. THAT WAS A VERY INTERESTING MORNING.”*

*“EACH FRIDAY MORNING IN KANDAHAR, THE LOCAL MERCHANTS AND THEIR YOUNG SONS WOULD SET UP THEIR WARES FOR THE WEEKLY MARKET. AS SOON AS THE MARKET OPENED THE BOYS WENT OFF TO SCHOOL. OUR BIGGEST HOPE WAS THAT SOMEDAY THE GIRLS WOULD ATTEND THE SAME SCHOOL.  
  
DREAM ON!”*



*“I DEPLOYED AS AN EMBARKED LEGAL ADVISOR ABOARD HMCS REGINA FOR OP ARTEMIS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN [IN 2003]. I WAS IN THE OPERATIONS ROOM DISCUSSING THE PLANNED BOARDING OF A VESSEL WITH THE OPS O, CHIEF NAVIGATION OFFICER AND THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER. IT WAS A PROUD MOMENT WHEN WE ALL REALIZED THAT WE 4 STRONG WOMEN WERE THE CORE OF THE OPS TEAM OF A DEPLOYED CANADIAN WARSHIP PLANNING A MARITIME SECURITY/COUNTER TERRORISM OPERATION - THE BOARDING OF A POTENTIALLY HOSTILE VESSEL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.”*

*“A SEVERELY WOUNDED IRAQI PRISONER-OF-WAR LAY ON A STRETCHER, SHAKING AND TREMBLING WITH FEAR AS HE WAITED TO ENTER THE OPERATING ROOM. HE WAS TERRIFIED OF WHAT MIGHT AWAIT HIM – TORTURE, PUNISHMENT, DEATH. I TOOK HIS TREMBLING HAND IN MINE, SMILED AND REASSURED HIM. HIS TREMBLING STOPPED AND HE NODDED IN APPRECIATION. THOUGH MAN HAS A DARK SIDE, KINDNESS AND COMPASSION CAN PREVAIL.”*



**MEMORIES AND EXPERIENCES FROM COMBAT CAN BE TOO RAW FOR MOST SOLDIERS TO RECOUNT, FEMALE OR OTHERWISE. SOME WOMEN I WAS ABLE TO SPEAK WITH ARE ONLY JUST NOW, YEARS AFTER THE INCIDENTS, BEGINNING TO RECEIVE TREATMENT FOR PTSD. SHARING THEIR STORIES WITH US TONIGHT WOULD SERIOUSLY INTERFERE WITH AND DELAY THEIR RECOVERY. WE THINK OF YOU AND WE WISH YOU WELL.**

**ALMOST 300 CANADIAN SERVICEWOMEN SERVED IN COMBAT ROLES IN AFGHANISTAN. IN TOTAL SOME 3,700 WOMEN SERVED DURING THE CONFLICT.**

*“IT WAS AS IF I HAD BEEN STUDYING FOR AN EXAM FOR 8 YEARS. FINALLY, I GOT TO WRITE THE TEST. FOR SOME QUESTIONS I KNEW THE ANSWERS COLD...FOR OTHERS I WOULD BE THE FIRST ONE EVER TO ANSWER.*

*IT WAS AN AMAZING FEELING TO GET OUT AND ACTUALLY DO OUR JOBS! I KNEW WE WERE WELL TRAINED, BUT I DID NOT REALIZE JUST HOW WELL, UNTIL WE STARTED DOING ROAD MOVES AND PATROLS.*

*DON'T WORRY DAD, CONFIDENCE DOES NOT MEAN CARELESSNESS. WE ARE VERY CAREFUL.”*



**PERHAPS SOME OF THE WOMEN IN THIS ROOM HAVE WRITTEN A LETTER SUCH AS THE ONE I WILL NOW BEGIN.**

*“DEAR MOM AND DAD,*

*THIS IS MY “JUST IN CASE” LETTER. IF YOU ARE READING IT, THEN YOU KNOW THAT I AM NOT COMING HOME....*

*THE CREATURE COMFORTS PROVIDED AT KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, KNOWN AS KAF, WERE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO THOSE OF US WHO WORKED*

*‘OUTSIDE THE WIRE’. FOR ABOUT A WEEK, MY SECTION HAD BEEN WORKING OUTSIDE THE WIRE WHEN WE WERE SHOCKED TO LEARN THAT THE KAF HAD BEEN SHELLLED BY THE TALIBAN. ALMOST IN UNISON, WE ASKED “WAS TIMMY’S HIT?”*

*WE HAD TO SMILE AT THE IRONY OF OUR OUTBURST.*

*LUCKILY EVERYONE WAS JUST FINE, INCLUDING TIMMY’S.*

*THIS WHOLE TOUR REMINDS ME OF BEING 16 AND GOING ON BENDERS.*

*YOU KNOW, THE WAY YOU GET YOURSELF ALL PUMPED UP TO GO OUT, STAY UP ALL NIGHT AND PARTY HARD?*

*THEN YOU CRASH, YOU EAT AND YOU DO IT ALL AGAIN.” (NICOLA GODDARD, 2005)*



**CAPTAIN NICOLA GODDARD WAS A FORWARD OBSERVATION OFFICER WITH THE ARTILLERY IN THE VANDOOS. THIS MEANT THAT SHE CONDUCTED HIGH EXPLOSIVE AND ILLUMINATION FIRE MISSIONS IN SUPPORT OF CANADIAN TROOP MANOEUVRES AGAINST A KNOWN ENEMY. SHE WAS THE FIRST CANADIAN SOLDIER TO DO THIS SINCE THE KOREAN CONFLICT OVER 50 YEARS EARLIER AND IT WAS AN HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE ENTIRE UNIT.**

**SHE HAD EARNED THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT OF HER MEN AND HER COMMANDERS. SHE OVERCAME THE GENDER DIVIDE.**

**A FEW HOURS AFTER THIS HISTORIC EVENT, SHE AND HER TEAM WERE SCANNING THE LANDSCAPE FOR TALIBAN FIGHTERS WHEN 3 ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADES HIT THEIR LIGHT ARMoured VEHICLE (LAV).**

**A STRAY PIECE OF SHRAPNEL LAUNCHED THE CAPTAIN INTO THE HISTORY BOOKS FOR THE SECOND TIME THAT DAY. CAPT GODDARD BECAME THE FIRST FEMALE CANADIAN COMBAT SOLDIER TO DIE IN BATTLE.**

**IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT THE CANADIAN PUBLIC FROM THE SIGHT OF HER FLAG- DRAPED COFFIN, PRIME MINISTER STEPEN HARPER ORDERED**



**THAT THE REPATRIATION TAKE PLACE IN PRIVATE, IN SECRET AND AT NIGHT.**

**NO HIGHWAY OF HEROES LAST JOURNEY FOR NICOLA AND HER FAMILY.**

**BUT CANADIANS HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN HER SACRIFICE. TWO SCHOOLS, A CANADIAN COAST GUARD SHIP, A LAKE, A FOUNDATION AND A CHARITY, HAVE ALL BEEN NAMED IN HER HONOUR. ONE OF THE BRIDGES ALONG THE HIGHWAY OF HEROES AND THE FAMOUS MEMORIAL ARCH ON THE GROUNDS OF THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE SHE ATTENDED, ALSO BEAR HER NAME. THESE TANGIBLE MEMORIALS ENSURE THAT HER LEGACY OF SERVICE WILL ENDURE.**

**AND NOW WE PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE. EVERY DAY SERVICEWOMEN ARE PROVING THAT WE ARE CRUCIAL MEMBERS OF OUR MILITARY. THINK OF ALL THE WOMEN SGTS, WARRANTS AND CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS WHO LEAD BY EXAMPLE AND HAVE SUCH A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON OUR SAILORS, SOLDIERS AND AVIATORS. THINK OF ALL THE MILITARY MOTHERS WHO ARE SUCH REMARKABLE ROLE MODELS.**

**WE ARE NOT GOING AWAY. WE ARE HERE TO SERVE!**





**FOR ME, THE MOTTO OF CANADA'S ORIGINAL AIR FORCE SAYS IT ALL:**

**"PER ADUA AD ASTRA."**

**THROUGH ADVERSITY TO THE STARS!**

**LCOL (RET'D) SUSAN BEHARRIELL**