

Lest We Forget

Remembering the Service and Sacrifices

of Wellington Residents

WWI and WWII

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This booklet contains information
on the veterans of the World Wars
whose banners hung in the town of Wellington
November 11, 2024

Compiled by Joanna Green

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Designed and edited by Sylvia McConnell

Lest We Forget

Remembering the Service and Sacrifices of Wellington Residents during the First and Second World Wars

First World War

At the start of the First World War, Wellington was a bustling community, boasting electric streetlights, a paved sidewalk on the north side of Main Street, and a train station. It was a busy hub for farming and the canning industry and was considered a progressive business centre.

The First World War lasted just over four years, ending on November 11, 1918. One hundred and six men and women from Wellington, Hillier and Rosehall enlisted for "King and Country" and served in various capacities during the War. Nineteen of them did not return.

Taken from the pamphlet "Wellington and the Great War"



The Wellington Platoon training in Wellington Park with Captain Ainsworth standing in front.

The Memorial Gates

The Memorial Gates at the entrance to the Wellington Park were constructed in the late 1920s and early 1930s by members of the Wellington Branch of the Canadian Legion, Post 160, which was formed in 1929. Legion members scoured the shorelines, searching for appropriate stones for the gates, which were erected by a Belleville stone mason.

The gates were originally built to pay tribute to those in the village who had served in the First World War. They now also commemorate those who served in the Second World War, Korea, and Afghanistan.



The following photos from WWI are from the
Marjorie Wiltse Collection



Waiting at the Wellington train station to ship out. The station was at the top of West Street.



The Wellington Platoon with Captain Ainsworth, front row centre, perhaps taken in Wellington Park.



Some of the names on the back of this photo are: Norman Foster, Albert Harvey, Tom Dermo (sic), and Doug Christie, in no particular order.



Taken at the pavillion at the Alexandra Hotel where the Wellington Library stands today.

Banners — First World War



Mary Bell (Mabel) Hubbs

Mary Bell (Mabel) Hubbs was born in Hillier in 1880 to Louis and Prudence Hubbs (née Nethery). Unfortunately, we don't know much about her early life, but at the age of 34, she decided to enlist with the Canadian Army Medical Corps. Mabel was listed as a "graduate nurse" on her attestation papers and became a nursing sister overseas, though these "sisters" were not part of any religious order.

Within a month of Mabel's enlistment, she had arrived in Europe, and her active service began in March of 1915 at No. 2 Canadian General Hospital in Le Tréport, Normandy. She would serve in France for over two years before spending the last year of the war moving back and forth between posts at hospitals in

England, including some time spent on the HMHS Araguaya, a military hospital ship.

One week after returning to France in May of 1918, Mabel suffered a severe concussion during an air raid at No. 1 Canadian General Hospital. The building was ripped apart by an explosion six beds away from where Mabel was working, and three nursing sisters were killed. A few weeks later, Mabel was hospitalized with “debility” or weakness and spent nine weeks recovering. In addition to her concussion symptoms, she suffered pain in her chest, general nervousness, insomnia, and tremors. Today, it is very possible that she would have been diagnosed with a form of post-traumatic stress disorder.

While in hospital, she was awarded the Royal Red Cross, Second Class. It is likely that this was due to her involvement in the air raid and its aftermath. The award was given to nurses who had “shown special devotion and competency over a long period of time or who had performed some very special act of bravery and devotion,” and no more than 5% of nurses received this commendation.

Mabel spent the last years of her life in Wellington, in the house at 21 West Street. She never idealized her wartime experiences and, instead, was honest about the brutal carnage that she had witnessed. Mabel was a well-respected member of the community until her death in 1947. She is buried at Christ Church Cemetery in Hillier.

*Written and remembered by Elspeth Domville
Banner sponsored by Wellington Pharmacy*



John Henry Campbell

John Campbell was born August 8, 1898, in Havergal, Carlow Township, Hastings County, to Robert James Campbell and Margaret Malinda Campbell (née Wadsworth). He was one of eight children.

In June of 1906, the family moved to Lot 8, Concession 2 in Hillier, Prince Edward County. The house they moved to still stands today, at the civic address of 856 Danforth Rd. at the corner of Swamp College Rd. and Danforth Rd. in Hillier. This property and its dwelling can be located on the 1863 Tremaine's Map. John would have attended the Swamp College School with his siblings. On March 10, 1913, at the age of fifteen, he was hired as a bank clerk at the Metropolitan Bank in Wellington.

On June 17, 1916, nearing his 18th birthday, John enlisted as a private in the infantry, service number 868316 with the 182nd O.S. Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Forces, out of Whitby, Ontario, where his training began and continued until May 3, 1917. The 182nd sailed to England on the ship Justico, destined for Otterpool Camp, where training continued until February 3, 1918, the date on which John sailed to France. On February 23, he was sent to the battlefield under command of the 116th Battalion, as the 182nd Battalion had been merged with the 116th.

John was killed on August 27, 1918, at the Battle of Bois-du-Sart, France, at the age of twenty. His body was interred in the Vis-en-Artois British Cemetery.

The Scotia Bank Archives, located in the main branch at 44 King West in Toronto, has a bronze memorial plaque honoring the sacrifice of nine men, John's along with eight others.

*Written and remembered by John's great-niece, Nancy Houghton
Banner sponsored by Nancy Houghton*



Thomas Clifford Wilson

Thomas Wilson, the eldest child of Alva Burton Wilson and Belle Huff, was born on a farm on the Irvine Gore near Chisholm, Hallowell Township, Prince Edward County, on February 17, 1894. His father and grandfather were prominent farmers who drew milk to the Ben Gill Cheese Factory, attended St. Mark's Anglican Church, Gerow Gore, and who were also staunch Orangemen, Masons and Conservatives. In short, the Wilson family, with its Irish Protestant and American Quaker roots, was well respected in the community.

Clifford Wilson was the family's hope for the future. Clifford and his younger sister Nellie Kathleen attended the one-room schoolhouse at the corner of Wilson and Schoharie Roads, SS No. 14, Hallowell Township. Clifford later attended Picton High School. He found employment with the Metropolitan Bank in Wellington and also did some relief work for the bank in Brighton.

A promotion to the Picton branch came in February 1911, and two years later he was off to head office in Toronto. In February 1915, Clifford made the decision to join his father in managing the family farm, but with mounting casualties overseas and the constant demand for new recruits, Clifford presented himself for active service at the Picton Armouries on December 28, 1916. He was 22 years old.

The 254th Battalion, "Quinte's Own", had been formed in November 1916, and it was to this unit that Clifford was attached. The local newspaper, *The Picton Gazette*, commented that members of the battalion were busy drilling under Sergeant Clifford Wilson's command and that they were shaping up into "a fine squad of men." By May 26, 1917, the training was complete and the men of the Battalion were given a hearty send-off from the railway station in Belleville en route for Halifax, Nova Scotia.

On June 2, 1917, they boarded the troopship the HMT Olympic, the sole surviving sister ship of the RMS Titanic, and sailed off to Liverpool, England. Sadly, Clifford contracted mumps on the voyage to England, a condition that could be serious for male adults. Upon his arrival in Liverpool, he was admitted to the military hospital in Seaforth and did not join the rest of his Battalion at the Canadian Army Camp in Seaford, East Sussex until June 30. Clifford was drafted into the 6th Reserve Regiment and then into the 21st Battalion as a private.

Clifford saw active duty at the Battle of Passchendaele, east of the town of Ypres in Belgium, where he was killed in action on November 4, 1917. He was buried at Tyne Cot War Cemetery in Belgium, the largest cemetery for Commonwealth soldiers in the world. Tyne Cot shelters the graves of over 11,000 soldiers. On the same day that her brother was killed, Nellie Wilson was singing a solo at St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Wellington entitled "Grant Us Peace, O Lord."

News of Clifford's death took time to reach home, and one can only imagine what the impact of that fateful telegram would have been. The newspaper correspondent for Chisholm and Gerow Gore noted that a "gloom was thrown over the whole neighbourhood when word was received on Sunday evening, November 18, of the death of Clifford Wilson, who was killed in action on November 4. His bereaved parents and sisters have the deepest sympathy of their many friends." The correspondent from Wellington expressed a similar sentiment: "This is yet another of Prince Edward's noblest sons who is filling a hero's grave. The Wilsons, like so many other Canadian families who had lost loved ones in the

Great War, had to pick up the pieces as best as they could, often experiencing a gaping hole in their lives that could never be filled. The family was never able to visit Clifford's grave in Belgium although a memorial service held in his honour at the family farm on the Irvine Gore on Sunday, December 2, 1917, may have helped to give them some closure.

Clifford is remembered in several places; namely, Tyne Cot Cemetery, Passchendaele, Belgium; his parents' graves at Glenwood Cemetery, Picton; the Prince Edward County War Memorial, Picton; St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Wellington; Christ Church Cemetery War Memorial, Hillier; the Wilson family farm at 783 Wilson Road, Hallowell Ward and the Canadian Book of Remembrance, Peace Tower, Ottawa.

*Written by Michael Korn, current owner and occupant of the Wilson family farm
where Clifford was born and raised
Banner sponsored by Michael Korn*



Ira Burd — First President of the Wellington Legion, Branch 160

Ira Burd was born in Crysler, Ontario. He survived service in the First World War and later became the first president of the Wellington Branch 160 Canadian Legion. He was also an active member of Wellington United Church. He sadly lost his only son, Wilson D. Burd, in active service during the Second World War (see below).

Ira served as postmaster in Wellington for 28 years and died at his home in Wellington in 1961 at the age of 68.

Banner sponsored by Wellington Branch 160 Royal Canadian Legion

Wilson D. Burd, son of Ira Burd, killed in action in WWII



They Died That We Might Live . . .



Fl. Sgt. Wilson Draper Burd—son of Mr. and Mrs. Ira Burd. Attended Wellington Continuation School 1934-1938 and 1939-1940. Took active interest in hockey and baseball and was a good swimmer and tennis player. Joined R.C.A.F. July, 1940 and received training at Eglinton, Port Albert, Windsor and received wings at Brantford, August 4th, 1941 as bomber pilot. Went overseas August 19th; served in England and Africa, attached to 108th Squadron R.A.F.; had 21 operational flights. Killed in Egypt April 18th, 1942, at the age of twenty-one, while acting as test pilot for Wellington bombers.



F/O. Thomas Ashton Fillingham—son of Mr. Thomas Fillingham and the late Mrs. Fillingham. Attended Wellington Continuation School 1927-1928. At the time of his enlistment

Banner sponsored by Wellington Branch 160 Royal Canadian Legion



Robert Clarence Thompson

Robert Clarence Thompson was “the boy soldier from Hillier,” whose father, R. W. Thompson, ran the Cloverdale cheese factory in Wellington for many years.

Robert Thompson was a student at Picton Collegiate Institute (now PECI) when he enlisted in the 80th Battalion at the age of thirteen. He was in the army for just 33 days before his father obtained his release. His brother Earl would recall that he was wearing short pants when he went to school that day and had to borrow long pants to enlist.

Thompson re-enlisted in Wellington on March 16, 1916, with the 155th Battalion. He was now fourteen years old. He was transferred to the 4th Pioneer Battalion, sent overseas, and trained in England for six months, then sailed for

France, where he served with the 224th Battalion and took part in the battle of Vimy Ridge. When the army learned of his true age, he was sent back to Canada in 1917 and discharged from the service. Again, he re-enlisted, almost right away, this time in Toronto with the First Depot Battalion.

When the Halifax explosion took place on Dec. 6, 1917, Thompson was with his battalion when it rushed to Nova Scotia for relief work. Upon his return to Toronto, he was promoted to sergeant major. He was fifteen years old at this point.

Thompson returned to France and transferred to the Canadian Mounted Rifles, with which regiment he took part in the battle of Mons.

When the Armistice was signed on Nov. 11, 1918, he was sixteen years old.

After the war, Thompson joined the family egg and creamery business in Petawawa.

*Written by Margaret Capon and re-printed with permission
Banner sponsored by Augustus House B&B*



Grant Haight

Private Grant Haight was born March 27, 1893, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Alton Haight. He was raised at 305 Noxon Ave. in Wellington, PEC, and joined the 16th Prince Edward Militia in 1912. In 1914, he was enrolled in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force at Val Cartier, Quebec, which was shipped out to fight in Belgium. He was reported missing at St Julien, in 1915, at the age of 22. He is remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Ypres, Belgium, one of 6,940 names of missing Canadians in Flanders.

In January 1915, he wrote the following letter to his parents, the original of which was printed in the *Picton Gazette*.

Salisbury Plain, January 1915

Dear Parents,

Xmas Box arrived, but a little late, in good order. the boys were kind to me when their boxes came, so I divided with them. The apples were dandy. We have just come in from a 15-mile march. I am well. Please thank all the kind friends who donated to my box. I tell you it was fine. Now, Mother, you and father keep up. Remember you have a brave lad who will fight for his country. Captain K. D Ferguson is well; also all the boys. We have good pastime — games of all kinds. Many thanks for all the papers you send from all my friends. Thanks to Editor of the Picton Times for paper. I enjoy it each week. Best love to all my relations, also to you and dear father.

Your loving son, Grant

PS - You will hear from me as long as I can write. I will go to the front with a brave heart.

*With excerpts from the pamphlet "Wellington and the Great War"
Banner sponsored by Dianne Scott*



Hillier-born Lieut-Col. W.A. Davern, began his military career as a Lieutenant in the 16th., Regiment, Picton, in 1915. The following year he was attached to the 139th. Bn., C.E.F. in Cobourg and later in 1916, transferred to the Royal Air Force Service, (Submarine patrol from Calshot and Great Yarmouth). He was appointed Flight Lieutenant on the amalgamation of the Naval Air Service and Royal Flying Corps into the Royal Air Force. In 1918 he was appointed Adjutant of No 92 CTS. Camp Borden.

On the establishment of the 2nd. (R) Battalion of Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment in 1940 he was appointed O.C. of "D" Co., Wellington with the rank of Captain, receiving his promotion to rank of Major in 1941.

Col. Davern is a former Reeve of Hillier township, a Past Master of Star-in-the-East Lodge, A.F. and A. M., and a member of the Orange Order, a member of St. Andrew's church, Wellington. Since 1927 he has carried on a hardware and implement business in Wellington.

His wife is the former Isabel Anderson; their daughter Mrs. Warren Jones. 1 lives in Belleville with his two grand children, Judith Ann ~~xxx~~ Jones and William Davern Jones.

William A. Davern (served in First and Second World Wars)

Hillier-born Lieutenant Colonel William A. Davern was a pilot who began his military service as a lieutenant in 1915 with the 16th Regiment in Picton. As Flight Lieutenant, he served as a member of the flying service of the Canadian Army and also flew anti-submarine patrols along the Scottish coast with the British Flying Service during the First World War. We know he was wounded, but there are no specific details surrounding the circumstances or extent of his injuries.

During the Second World War, he commanded the 2nd Battalion of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment from June 1, 1945 to October 31, 1946. Beginning in 1927, he operated a hardware store on Main St. in Wellington. After his retirement in the 1960s, he and his wife moved from their quarters above the store to 295 Noxon Ave. He was a charter member of the Wellington Branch 160, a former reeve of Hillier Township, and a member of St Andrew's Anglican Church. He is buried in the Wellington Cemetery on Consecon Street.

*With excerpts from the pamphlet "Wellington and the Great War"
Banner sponsored by Don & Moira Creighton*



Wilbert Ernest King

Wilbert Ernest King was born on January 6, 1898, in Percy Township in the united counties of Northumberland and Durham. He spent his early years on the family farm in the Norwood area with his parents Thomas King and Janet Scott and his older sister Ida. When the First World War began in 1914, Wilbert tried to enlist at the age of 16, but his mother intervened. He did finally enlist in March of 2016 at the age of 18. The family story is that Wilbert stole a bag of grain from his father and then sold it to pay his fare to Peterborough to enlist. He was a member of the 193 Battalion and then later the 18th Battalion. He received the Military Medal during his time of service.

While Wilbert was serving in Europe his parents sold their farm and moved to Wellington. He joined his family there after returning to Canada in 1919 at the end of the war. After arriving in Wellington, Wilbert met his future wife, Kathleen Macdonald. They married on November 22, 1922 at St. Andrew's Anglican Church. They lived in Kathleen's family home at 308 Main Street with her parents James Macdonald and Francis (Frankie) Niles. Wilbert and Kathleen had two daughters, Hilda, and Marjorie.

Wilbert spent most of the rest of his life in Wellington. He worked for Canadian Cannery for many years where one of his positions was "road man". He would travel to farmer's fields checking crops to determine when they were at their peak to harvest for canning. During World War II, Wilbert re-enlisted (rank of 2nd Lieutenant at the time of enlistment) and served at the training depot in Kingston. At one point after the war he worked for the village as secretary of the Wellington Public Utilities. Wilbert was very involved in his community as a member of the congregation of St. Andrews Anglican Church, Star-in-the-East Lodge, the Masonic Lodge and Branch 160 Royal Canadian Legion.

Wilbert King died on January 11, 1971, just days after his 73rd birthday.

Compiled by Kathryn Wiltse

Banner Sponsored by Wilbert King's grandchildren



Dr. Russell Thompson

Dr Russell Thompson joined the army as a medical student in 1916 and served overseas in the artillery. He moved to Wellington after the war, where he established a family practice in 1927. He lived in the house located at the southwest corner of Main and West Streets.

Doctor Thompson, a highly respected and colorful character, was a charter member of Legion Branch 160.

From the pamphlet "Wellington and the Great War"

Banner sponsored by Wellington Branch 160 Royal Canadian Legion

Banners – Second World War

Women Who Served at Home



The Wellington Red Cross 1945

This photo is from Wellington Museum's own collection. It was taken in the Wellington Town Hall in 1945. The women sewed items for the soldiers and made up Red Cross packages in the Hall to send overseas.

Last names in cursive on the back of the photo (as best the editor could decipher).

Top row: Nelson, Pyne, Leavitt, Burd, Davern, Huyck (2), Lane

Second Row: Dorland, Wiltse, Brickenback, Morden, Rorke, McFaul, Shurie, Tice, Wilson, Corvall, Adams, Phillips, Nash, Pearsall, Maybe, Lumb, Huyck

Front Row: Hutchinson, Stuart, Gay, Boyle, Hubbs, Harris, Vandervater, Tice, Suttaly, Cleminson, Clinton, Valliau



Otto Bowerman

Otto was born and raised in Wellington. The family home was on Main Street. He had three siblings, an older sister, and a younger brother and sister. He was about seventeen years old when he joined the Home Guard, which trained at the old arena in Wellington. After the young men had finished their training, they marched from the school yard of CML Snider School over to the train station and off to Petawawa. After a stint in Petawawa, he returned home, but then, on March

15, 1942, he went to Kingston to join the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR). His position was that of leading stoker.

Otto was posted first to a destroyer, then a corvette, then to a mine sweeper. He saw service around England, Ireland, Scotland, Africa, Iceland, Bermuda, Newfoundland, United States, and Gibraltar. In 1945, he was wounded and hospitalized. After receiving an honourable discharge, he returned home to Wellington, where he lived the rest of his life.

Compiled by Otto's sister, Kathleen Wilson (Bowerman)
Banner Sponsored by Kathleen Wilson (Bowerman)



Frank Engelsdorfer

Frank Engelsdorfer was born on April 24, 1926, in Almáskamarás, Hungary. Frank immigrated to Canada in 1933 with his family. They started a tobacco farm in Delhi, Ontario.

Frank enlisted in the Merchant Navy in Hamilton in 1943 and served on Merchant Navy ships during WWII. In 1953, he joined the Canadian Army as a Royal Canadian Electrical Mechanical Engineer (RCEME).

He served in Korea from 1953-1955, Lahr, Germany 1959-1962, and Cyprus from 1964-1965. During the time of his service, Frank was awarded the following medals: Atlantic Star, Pacific Star, 39-45 Star, 39-45 Medal, Korean Medal, Korean-UN Medal, Cyprus-UN Medal, and the Canada Good Conduct Medal.

Frank fell in love with the County while he was stationed at CFB Picton from 1962-1969, so when he retired in 1976, he moved to Wellington, where he served as Legion president and landfill attendant. Many County people will remember him in one of those roles. He passed away January 28, 2000 in Wellington, Ontario.

*Compiled by Frank's grandson Corey Engelsdorfer
Banner sponsored by the Engelsdorfer Family*



Garratt Harris

Born in 1918 and raised in Wellington, Garratt Harris served in the Canadian Navy as stoker from 1939-1945 through WWII. His service involved 19 months at sea in North American coastal waters, followed by service in the English Channel out of Portsmouth. He was lead stoker on MTB 461, 29th Flotilla, and served on D-Day in Belgium.

At the end of the war, he returned home to continue working as a mechanic and boat builder in the Harris family garage with his father Frank. The garage was established in 1840 as the William Harris Carriage Co. and was located at 182 Main St. The family home, which was built in 1854 by Archibald McFaul, was nearby at 180 Main Street.

Garratt served as volunteer fire chief for the Wellington Fire Dept from 1951-1964 and was an avid hockey player. He died in 1975.

*Compiled by Garratt's daughter, Deb Harris
Banner sponsored by Deb, Helen, and Robert Harr*



Vernon “Beef” MacDonald

Wellington born and bred Vernon MacDonald was one of Prince Edward County’s many Second World War veterans, but few saw as much adventure and harrowing danger as the diminutive lad known in the County as “Beef.”

In May of 1944, MacDonald — nicknamed “Beef” because his uncle was a butcher and Vernon was his delivery boy — was wounded by enemy fire while serving in the Royal Canadian Navy. While it ended his war, Beef returned home to the County to raise a family and run a business. He passed peacefully in 2011 at the age of 87.

When he sat for an interview for *The Belleville Intelligencer* in 2009, the 85-year-old could still recall with remarkable clarity the night he was wounded. When interviewed about his war years, MacDonald answered most questions about the war with a shrug and a chuckle, explaining that apart from his injury, the war “didn't seem so bad.”

Beef grew up spending plenty of time on Lake Ontario, hunting and fishing in the County and as a result got to be a good shot with a rifle and a shotgun. At seventeen, he lied about his age and enlisted at Kingston in 1943.

“Everyone was joinin', so I figured I had to,” he said with a laugh.

His brother Alfred had traveled the South Pacific with the navy, but Beef wasn't allowed to serve with him because several American brothers had been killed in action. “They didn't want two brothers on the same boat.”

After a few months serving in Britain's Royal Navy, MacDonald was returned to the Royal Canadian Navy, where he was assigned to the 65th Motor Torpedo Boat (MTB) Flotilla. He first saw active service early in 1944.

He and 26 other men crewed a D-class MTB. It measured 33.5 metres in length and bristled with several guns of various sizes plus torpedoes and depth charges. MacDonald's job aboard MTB 726 was firing the speedy attack boat's twin 20-mm Oerlikon guns. “I put in for it,” he said. “I wanted to be a gunner.”

With his skills honed hunting in the fields and duck blinds of the County, he was a good shot and that's what counted when the quarry was Nazi E-boats on the waters of the English Channel, most often in the dead of night.

He summed up his war experience in just a few words.

“Didn't bother me a bit. Had a good time. I didn't mind it,” he added. “I liked shooting guns.”

Missions were most always at night. “They could blow you out of the water in the daytime.”

The channel was often rough, cold and foggy, he said, and the scene was “blacker than hell. You could hardly see your hand in front of your face. ... My ol' lips would puff up and my eyes would feel like two pissholes in the sand,” he said, wincing as he remembered the feeling.

MacDonald said his boat's 27-man crew would see combat about once a week, but every night there were the sights and sounds of battle. Even if they didn't encounter the enemy, someone in their group of ships would.

“You could see guys fighting with tracer shells and guns going. If they needed help they'd holler.”

The MTBs would hunt convoys of German freighters, minesweeping Raumboote(s) known as R-boats, and the fast-attack E-boats that were targeting Allied cargo ships. The Canadians' job was to find and sink the Nazi convoys as they left the European coast.

“They were a little faster than us, but we could outshoot them,” MacDonald said of the E-boats.

“We had more armament — not that we were better shots.”

As Beef explained to a news reporter who interviewed him in 2009, the first sign of the enemy would come via a blip on radar or a report from another Allied craft. The MTB would close to within about 300 yards of the convoy. On a good night, the other ships' silhouettes would be clearly visible, and they would open fire.

Listening to his skipper's targeting orders in his headset, MacDonald would squeeze hand triggers and blast away at German boats.

“I could shoot around 400 rounds a minute out of the two (guns),” he said. “I had two guys loading them for me.”

The Germans returned fire, at times putting football-size holes through MacDonald's ship.

MacDonald's crew once rescued an air crew of five Australians and two New Zealanders, pulling them from the North Sea. The rescue earned the Canucks a “mention in a dispatch.”

Beef's war would end May 24, 1944.

The crew launched on rough water that day, around 5 p.m. MacDonald said they were “looking for trouble” around Jersey Island, the largest of the Channel Islands. They found it early the next morning when they engaged a German convoy.

“We were trying to find them,” MacDonald said. “I think we started shooting first, caught 'em going in there. We were pretty close — too close.”

His boat made three passes at the convoy, firing continually. “On the second shot I could feel my leg burning,” MacDonald said. On the third pass, he said, “They shot the sight off my gun and the shrapnel went in my forehead and eye. Goddamn lucky I didn't get it between the eyes.

“I went backwards, so they said. Had to unstrap me from the gun. I was all covered in blood from my Number Two. The two guys said they didn't know whether to take me down below or throw me overboard.”

His “Number Two” was another able seaman named Evans. The Torontonians was killed in the same blast that wounded MacDonald.

Moe Allison of Trenton and a third crewman died the same night; two more were wounded.

“We just got the hell outta there,” MacDonald said.

Blind in one eye, the young seaman was sent home.

MacDonald regained sight in his wounded eye shortly after the year 2000, when Dr. D. W. Whiteman, of Trenton, removed the shrapnel, using surgical techniques not available in medical science until then.

“I’ve still got shrapnel in this leg, though,” he noted to his interviewer, tapping his left shin.

Beef returned home to the County to his mom and dad, Ralph and Florence MacDonald, and joined his father in the family-owned electrical business. Beef would later take on the business and become the hydro manager for the village of Wellington.

On his return, Beef took up playing a variety of sports in the County, including softball and hockey, and he met and married Jean Phillips of Consecon. The couple went on to have three girls, Linda, Jeanette and Sandra, building a home on the east end of Main Street on West Lake. Beef ran the electrical business, and he also erected five small cabins on their property on Main Street and rented them to tourists and fishermen through the tourist seasons.

Later, Beef MacDonald would work for Ontario Hydro, which took over the utility in Wellington, and retired from Hydro at the age of 65 and his own electrical business at 70.

To the end, Beef MacDonald was a fixture in the village of Wellington, walking up-street to meet some chums and spend time over coffee at the Grill in town.

He passed peacefully with his family at his side at Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital on June 1, 2011.

*With files courtesy of a newspaper profile compiled by Luke Hendry, The Intelligencer, Nov 10, 2009
Banner sponsored by his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren*



Robert Reilly

Date of Birth: March 20, 1908

Place of Birth: Limavady, County Derry, Northern Ireland

Robert (Bob) Reilly emigrated to Wellington, Ontario, Canada from Limavady, N.I. May 24, 1924, with his parents, Sam and Maggie Reilly, along with his siblings, all sixteen of them! There were eleven boys and five girls. The family, including Bob, lived at 170 Main St., Wellington.

When WWII broke out, Bob, along with eight of his brothers, enlisted in the Hastings Prince Edward Regiment. Bob enlisted on Jan 17, 1940, as soon as the fall canning crops were brought in. Prior to the war, Bob worked in the canning industry in Wellington, mostly with Canadian Cannery. During the war, he was stationed first at Aldershot in the UK, awaiting mobilization. Then, Bob served in

France and several other locations in Europe before he was discharged in 1945 at the end of the war, to return to civilian life.

Bob's record of service indicates he was injured during his service, but he remained on active duty. He received medals for his service: 1939-45 Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, Clasp and War Medal 1939-1945, and the King George VI Medal. These medals were presented to Bob and his brothers at the Sandbanks.

Part of Bob's return to civilian life included working in Toronto as an auto mechanic. It was in High Park there that he met his future wife, a young nurse named Eunice Elizabeth Parr. Bob and Eunice married in Wellington United Church on July 19, 1948. They took up residence in Wellington, where they raised a family of four children, Grace, Alec, Bob, and Cecelia. Bob continued to work in the canning industry until he became ill. Following this illness, Bob passed away Oct 2, 1961, in Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital. He is interred in Wellington Cemetery.

Compiled by Bob's daughter Cecelia Reilly

Banner sponsored by his family

The Eleven Reilly Brothers



Left to Right in the Photo: James, Edward, Robert, Stuart, Thomas, Matthew, William, John
Eight brothers joined D Company of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. They undertook basic training at Camp Picton, barracks located in the Picton Armoury. This group photo was taken at the Sandbanks, where they received their medals.

Medals/Honours: The defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, Clasp and War Medal 1939-45, and the King George VI medal

The Hastings Prince Edward Regiment was the most decorated regiment in the Canadian Army in WWII.

The brothers served across Europe, from Italy to France to Holland, and in the UK. They were not always together, but when they were, they were a force, no doubt. I am unsure if Tom or Joseph went overseas, but they both were in the regiment on duty here in Canada at a minimum. Tom served as a cook at barracks.

The Reillys immigrated to Wellington in 1924, from Limavady, Ireland. The family worked on a farm on the Gore, in Canadian Cannerys, and also had a fruit and veg store in Toronto on Jane St called Reilly Brothers Produce.

In January, 1940, James, John, and William were overseas in England, awaiting orders.

1. James Stuart Reilly, born July 9, 1909, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: Jan 11, 1978, Toronto,
Married
Occupation: pre-war, worked in a fruit canning factory
Post-war: labourer
Rank: private
2. Edward Reilly, born September 30, 1911, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: April 27, 1971, Wooler, ON
Occupation: pre-war, mechanic, Highland Dairy, Toronto, ON
Post-War: 4th class stationary engineer at Bata Shoe, Batawa, ON
Married: Bessie Weese, Dec 24, 1938, four sons, two daughters
Rank: private
3. Robert Reilly, born March 20, 1908, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: Oct 2, 1961, Picton, ON
Married: Eunice Elizabeth Parr, July 19, 1948 two sons, two daughters
Occupation: pre-war: Canning Factory, Wellington, ON
Post-war: Canadian Cannerys, Wellington, ON
Rank: private
Duties: infantry, cook
Places of Service: Italy, Holland, France, England

4. Stewart Reilly, born Nov 21, 1905, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland
Died: 1974
Married
Children: four sons, three daughters
Occupation: pre-war, greenhouse labourer
Rank: private
Places of Service: Italy, Holland, France, England
5. Thomas Reilly, born Aug 27, 1899, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: 1972, Grimsby, ON (living in Rosehall at the time)
Bachelor
Occupation: Pre/post war, labourer
Rank: private
Duties: cook/infantry
Tom served with the Royal Ulster Constabulary prior to immigrating to Canada in 1924.
6. Matthew Reilly, born April 2, 1914, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: April 5, 1994, Hamilton, ON
Married: Jennie Chillcott, 1938, one daughter
Occupation: Pre-war: labourer
Post-war: industrial painter
Rank: private
Places of Service: Italy, Holland, France, England
7. William Houston Reilly, born April 19, 1904, Govan, Scotland
Died: Oct 16, 1977, Ottawa, ON
Married: Rose Lystiuk, three sons, one daughter
Occupation: post-war: foreign affairs and international trade
Rank: corporal
Medals/Honours: The Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, Clasp and War Medal 1939-45
Places of Service: Italy, Holland, France, England

8. John Reilly, born June 29, 1917, Ballykelly, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: April 27, 1991, Port Colborne, ON
Married: Doreen Hawkings, two sons, one daughter
Post-war: self- employed
Rank: lance corporal
Places of Service: Europe and England

Absent: The three brothers listed below were absent from the photo on page 38.
Attached is a photo of Hugh. There are no photos of Joseph or Samuel available.

9. Hugh Reilly, born Feb 17, 1913, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: Aug 7, 1987, Simcoe, ON
Married: Norma Huff, 1938, one daughter
Occupation: pre-war: maintenance worker
Post-war: accounting



Hugh Reilly

10. Joseph Reilly, born Feb 27, 1907, Limavady, Northern Ireland
Died: Jul 7, 1990, British Columbia
Married: twice, 1929 in Toronto, 1947 in B.C., eight children
Occupation pre-war: deliveryman
Post-war: orchardist
Rank: private

11. Samuel Reilly, born Dec 18, 1900, Lanark, Scotland
Died: Oct 26, 1975, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania
Buried: Arlington National Cemetery
Sam served with the US Navy in WWII as he had become a US citizen in 1939.
Married: Mary Clements, 1929, Philadelphia, USA
Occupation pre/post war: auto mechanic

Compiled by Cecilia Reilly

Reilly Brothers banner sponsored by the Reilly Family

(From THE TORONTO STAR, Thursday, October 1, 1992)
Special 100 year (1892-1992) edition
Titled THE WAY WE WERE: 1940

MA REILLY SENDS SONS TO CALL HITLER'S BLUFF

Wishes She Could Get "Whack at Him" Herself -
Three Boys Overseas and Eight Are Hoping They'll Go, Too -
They Come From Erin

Look out, Hitler! Here come the "Fighting Reillys". As it turned out, nine of Ma Reilly's 11 boys made it over to Europe - and all came back. Today, 52 years later, only one of the children, Matthew, is still living. This lively report appeared Feb. 3, 1940.

Hitler's going to have to tackle Prince Edward County's "fighting Reillys" before he's through. Three of 11 boys in the same Reilly family are now overseas, another is training in Canada, and the others are waiting to be called up.

Eight of the brothers belonged to the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment several years ago. "We were named the "Fighting Reillys'," said eldest son Tom. "We have been called the Reilly Expeditionary Force, but that name will be nearer correct when we all get over to Europe."

"I wish I could get a whack at Hitler," declared his mother, "for I'd soon put him out of business. He's nothing but a big bluffer and the Allies have called his bluff."

The Reilly family consists of 17 children. Of these, six boys were born in Ireland and five in Scotland, where the Reillys lived for some time before coming to Canada in 1924. Mr. Reilly liked the prospects for farming in Canada and has worked at that occupation until recently.

"I'd like to join up with the boys," he remarked, "but I'm afraid I'm too old now. I am glad to see them in uniform fighting for their King and country, and I know they will give a good account of themselves."

Tom expressed disappointment at not being in uniform and hopes he may be able to join up soon. He was unable to pass the present strict medical examinations, but hopes to be "in there" with the boys before long. Active service duty is familiar to Tom, who served with the Royal Ulster Special Constabulary four years during the trouble between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State. "I was an 'A Special' man and was right in the thick of the fracas, but luckily escaped being wounded," he said.

The 11 brothers range in age from 41 to 22. The three now overseas are Corporal William, 37, Pte. James, 27, and Pte. John, 22, with Pte. Robert, 29, with a depot battalion in Canada. Others are: Stewart of Wellington, a greenhouse employee who is awaiting a call from the heavy artillery at Kingston; Hugh and Matthew at Simcoe; Edward, a dairy employee, and Joseph, a paperhanger, both of Toronto; and Samuel George, mechanic, of Philadelphia. Of the 11, seven are married.

Pilot Officers Alexander Robert Ross (61427 RAAF)
Wilfred Gordon Craig (R187958 RCAF)



Alex Ross was born in Casino, Australia. He was the son of Sandy and Eliza Ross, and the eldest of three boys. In 1941, he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force at the age of twenty. Four years later, having attained the rank of pilot officer, Mick was stationed in Canada as part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.

Wilfred Gordon Craig was born in 1922 in Merlin, Ontario. In 1944, he was a pilot officer with the Royal Canadian Air Force, stationed at Trenton, Ontario.

On March 21, 1944, the pair were on a routine flight, practising instrument flying, just north of Wellington. Sadly, their plane crashed due to wing failure, slamming into a field on what is now known as Wilson Road.

Compiled with information from Michael Korn and excerpts from The Times (For additional details, see the full story that follows.)

Banner sponsored by Joyce Blackburn

The Story of the Plane Crash

Pilot Officers Craig and Ross were killed in a flying accident on Tuesday, March 21, 1944, on a farm owned by Ray Bird, approximately four miles south of the RCAF Station at Mountain View. The accident happened around 9 a.m. on that fateful day.

The flight, in a Cornell plane Mk.1 FH723, had originated from Flying Instruction School (F.I.S. No. 1) in Trenton at around 8.10 a.m. There was clear visibility at 15 miles, with a gentle wind coming out of the north. Pilot officers Craig and Ross were authorized by their flying instructor Pilot Officer S. A. Milne to carry out instrument flights, each to act as safety pilot in turn. On the first authorization, Pilot Officer Ross was to act as safety pilot.

At around 9.00 a.m. two farmers living in the vicinity of the crash said that they heard an explosion and saw pieces of wing floating earthwards; the starboard wing had broken off in mid-air. A farmer living at what is now 783 Wilson Road recalled thinking that the pilot had made a deliberate effort to avoid hitting the farmhouse. There were no witnesses to the crash in the field on the north side of Wilson Road. The aircraft struck the ground at a fairly shallow angle on the starboard side, then cartwheeled over, breaking up the port wing and finally coming to rest about 180 feet from the point of impact. It immediately caught fire and attempts to pull the pilots from the wreckage were hindered by the intensity of the flames. Their bodies were taken by ambulance to Trenton. In the following days, many people from far and wide came to view the wreckage.

Trenton did not receive news of the crash until noon that day, and the scene of the accident was not visited until the afternoon of the following day. A few men from Trenton were deployed to guard the crash site and were billeted at local farmhouses. Stanley J. Fitzer, who stayed at the Kennedy farm, now 783 Wilson Road, scribbled down a poem about the crash on RCAF letterhead and left it for Ruth McLean, who handed it to the present owner, Michael Korn, in 1996. It was then framed and holds a place of honour in the house. The poem can be found on the next page.

*It was on the morning of the twenty-first in March of Forty-four
That we heard we'd lost an aircraft we had flown so much before,
But we didn't know the number nor the crew that was aboard
Still we hoped that there was an easy death assured them by the Lord.*

*"Easy?" I had asked myself – for the pilots that had died
Could it ever have been easy in their life-destroying dive?
God! How they must have suffered when they knew that death was near
When they saw the evil face of death with its cruel laughing sneer.*

On the evening of March 21 at 7.41 p.m., the fateful news of Pilot Officer Craig's death was sent by telegram to his mother, who lived at RR#3, Merlin, Ontario. The following day a telegram was despatched to the father of Pilot Officer Ross, who lived in Eungella, via Murwillumbah, NSW, Australia. One can only imagine what effect this devastating news would have had on family and friends.

Pilot Officer Craig had made plans to go to the movies with Mildred (Millie) Ellerbeck, the night of March 21. She had joined the RCAF on December 10, 1943 and was posted to the Motor Transport Division of the Air Force. She and Craig were both from the Port Alma area and had travelled on the train together and shared stories. Shortly after the fatal crash, Ellerbeck was asked by her commanding officer to take a group of guards to a farmer's field to guard the crash site. She casually asked what plane the hanger was from and felt a chill go down her spine when she found out and confirmed that Craig had been killed. When she informed the C.O. that she and Craig were neighbours, she was relieved of her duties and given the day off.

On Thursday, March 23, a funeral service with full military honours was held in Trenton for the two men; it included a parade and rifle salute. Craig's body was taken by train that afternoon to Merlin, Ontario, where it arrived around 10.15 p.m. A funeral service was held at the home of Craig's parents in Port Alma on Saturday, March 25, the Rev. C. L. Couzens of Romney officiating. Internment took place in Pardoville Cemetery, across the road from Lake Erie. A photograph

taken at the gravesite shows a casket covered with a large Union Jack with Craig's RCAF cap set on top of it and a mountain of flowers behind it. A simple white cross with the words J. 41200 P/O Wilfred G. Craig – R.C.A.F. – Mar 21, 1944 stood at the grave until replaced by a stone monument of salmon coloured granite. Millie Ellerbeck was also present at the funeral and had a photograph taken at the graveside. Craig's parents became very close to her as did Craig's younger brother, although for him, much later in life.

The funeral for Pilot Officer Ross was a vastly different affair. Thousands of miles from home, no family was able to attend the service conducted by Padre A. E. Caulfield in the chapel of the R.C.A.F. Station, Trenton, at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 23. Both Group Captain A. D. Bell-Irving. MC, Commanding Officer, and the Officer Commanding No.1 Flying Instructors School attended the service, together with a large group of officers and airmen from the station and, in particular, from the late officer's unit. Full Air Force honours were bestowed in the funeral parade that followed the service. The remains were taken to the Protestant vault in Trenton, from which they were removed and interred in the ground on May 19, 1944; the location being Grave No. 5, Plot 203, Row 1, St. George's Anglican Church Cemetery.

A photograph of the grave sent to the family in Australia shows a white cross with the following words written on it: 61427 P/O Alexander Robert Ross – R.A.A.F. – Died 21st March 1944. A small Union Jack was strapped to the back of the cross at the top, with flowers on either side of the cross. The wooden cross was later replaced by a grey granite marker stone with the insignia of the Royal Australian Air Force at the top. Below are the words: Pilot Officer – Alexander R. Ross – R.A.A.F. – 21st March 1944. Below this is a cross inscribed in the stone and below this the words: His Duty Fearlessly — And Nobly Done – Ever Remembered. There is no date of birth given.

The first family member to visit Ross's grave was his niece Yvonne Bower, daughter of Alan Keith Ross and his wife Olive. She was with her husband Graeme and son Troy. They visited St. George's Cemetery in Trenton, 67 years to the day after Ross was killed, on March 21st, 2011.

While the funeral services, or news of them, may have helped bring some closure, knowing that two young men were killed in their prime could not have been easy to live with. Families had to pick up the pieces and continue on with life as best they could. Commanding Officer A.D. Bell-Irving in a letter to Craig's

mother, dated March 27, 1944, suggested that Ross's father would probably appreciate a letter from her. The two mothers corresponded for quite some time after the crash.

Two days earlier on March 25th, a telegram was sent from the R.A.A.F. Headquarters to the Presbyterian Minister, The Manse, Murwillimbah, NSW that read as follows: "Staff Chaplain Marchant appreciate kindly arrange visit condolence Mr. A. R. Ross Eungella via Murwillumbah father of Pilot Officer Alexander Robert Ross killed aircraft accident Canada Twentyfirst March. Already officially notified. Please advise when visit completed."

Both families received the personal effects of their loved ones, Ross's belongings arriving home at the end of August 1944. On September 3, Ross's mother wrote the following poignant letter to "The Officer in Charge, Central Repository".

Dear Sir,

In opening my late son's personal effects, I was very disappointed that his Pilot-Officer uniform was not enclosed so am writing to ask if it would be possible at all to obtain same. If not, we would dearly love to have the wings that he was presented with on gaining his commissioning. I am sorry to be putting you to so much trouble, but I know you will understand our feelings in wanting to obtain the uniform and wings for which our son worked so hard to obtain.

I remain,

Yours faithfully, Mrs. A. R. Ross.

Back in Prince Edward County, where the crash occurred, the field was plowed over in the summer, but Mr. Ray Bird kept a few items that he had found and gave them to the Craig family when they came for a visit in September 1944. The Accidents Investigation Branch of the R.C.A.F. filed report No. 177 about the crash, just days after it had happened on March 28, 1944. The report concluded that the failure of the starboard wing had been the "result of overloading during the recovery from some position assumed during instrument flying." It recommended, "that the safety pilot must take action before the danger limit is attained regardless of the status or ability of the first pilot." Craig's father, Mr. Frederick Craig, did not accept this conclusion at all. He was convinced that there was a design flaw in the

wing of the plane, and by the end of the war, the R.C.A.F. did sell most of its Cornell's to the civilian market. The last ones were retired in 1948.

In a letter dated October 28, 1944, Mr. Craig raised the following points with the RCAF:

- The plane was so badly smashed up after the crash, it would be hard to determine whether or not it had defects before the crash.
- The plane had a sticker or card on it with the word "Unserviceable."
- The plane was in a crash a week or so before the accident. The wing was broken, and it was either repaired or replaced, and this was the wing that failed.

"I know," he wrote, "there has been carelessness somewhere and this accident was the result." No further action was taken on the part of the R.C.A.F.

Although Craig and Ross had different life experiences, both had worked hard to pursue their dreams of become members of their respective country's air forces.

Wilfred Gordon (Gordie) Craig, the eldest son of Frederick G. Craig and his wife Ellen née Reid, was born in Riverside, Ontario on May 19, 1924. The Craigs had come to Canada in 1920 from Belfast, Northern Ireland, and were blessed with another son, James Ernest (Ernie), who was born in 1929. Gordie and Ernie had two uncles living in Canada as well; namely, Jim Reid who lived in Port Alma at the time of Gordie's death and William Reid of Ottawa. The family moved to Port Alma in about 1938, where Mr. and Mrs. Craig purchased the town's gas station. They also operated a little restaurant known as Breezeway Court.

Times were tough during the Great Depression; however, Ernie remembers scaling the cliffs along the lake and playing with the family dog, "Old Sport". Gordie received his high school education at the Merlin Continuation School, finishing Grade 10 and also took a vocational course in Windsor. He had a job driving a truck for Stein's Bakery, followed by driving a truck for a local gravel company. He later moved to Windsor, Ontario, where he found work in a factory. Gordie enlisted with the R.C.A.F. on October 30, 1942. He attended the training centre in St. Hubert, Quebec, and was in the same class as Alexander Ross. They both received their wings on January 28, 1944 and were commissioned on February 1.

Alexander Robert "Mick" Ross, the eldest of five children, was born in Casino, NSW, Australia on September 10, 1921 to Alexander Richmond Ross and his wife Elisa Maud. He was nicknamed "Mick," a name which stuck, in order to avoid confusion since his first name was the same as his father's. At the time of his

enlistment at No. 2 Recruiting Centre in Sydney with the Royal Australian Air Force on November 18, 1941, Mick lived on the family farm at Reserve Creek Via Murwillumbah. He was only twenty years old. His enlistment papers indicate that he was 5'8" tall, 136 lbs, with a medium complexion, blue eyes and brown hair. He was shown to be Presbyterian by faith. Reserve Creek was only a few miles from the coast and south of the border with Queensland.

Mick was initially employed maintaining aircraft; however, his hard work and determination paid off and on August 11, 1943, he set sail from Sydney, bound for Canada and pilot training at No. 13 SFTS, St. Hubert, Quebec. He was officially posted there from August 26, 1943 until he received his wings at the end of January. At this time, both he and Pilot Officer Craig, as they were now known, were transferred to No.1 FIS Trenton. Apparently, Winston Churchill had requested that the top 10% of any graduating class be encouraged to become instructors, hence the postings to Trenton.

Pilot Officer Ross flew for the first time at Trenton on February 17; his last flight before the accident was only a month later on March 17. A. D. Bell-Irving, commanding officer of the R.C.A.F. station Trenton, in a letter written to Ross's father after the fatal crash described his son as "a high average pilot and was doing well on his course, was happy in his work and popular with staff and trainees alike. His loss is keenly felt at this school." Ross's funeral was handled by Northey Funeral Home, 170 Dundas Street West, Trenton. Expenses were listed as \$120. Pilot Officer Ross is remembered in Australia on the war memorial at All Saints' Anglican Church in Murwillumbah, dedicated on November 1, 1960 and on panel 133 in the commemorative section of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Pilot Officer Craig is remembered on the Wheatley Cenotaph and on page 283 of the Second World War Book of Remembrance, located in the Peace Tower, Ottawa. It is opened to that page on June 17 of every year. On Saturday, October 13, 2012 at 1:30 p.m., a memorial stone to both pilots was dedicated by Rev. Andrew Wilson of St. Andrew's Anglican Church at 783 Wilson Rd, across the road from the field in which the promising lives of two young men were snuffed out. Pilot Officer Craig's brother Ernie was in attendance along with his wife Rose, daughter Sharon and son Dave. Members of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch No. 78 Picton, under the leadership of Mike Slatter provided a colour party, members of the Picton Legion Pipes and Drums, Susan March, pipe major, provided music for the colour party, and members of the Concert Band of

Cobourg under the direction of Paul Storms provided music during the ceremony. Rev. Joyce Blackburn blessed the RCAF Ensign and Susanne Drew brought greetings from the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch No. 465, Merlin, Ontario.

A YouTube video of the dedication can be viewed [here](#):

[https://youtu.b HYPERLINK](https://youtu.be/ZZu23Eat72A)
["https://youtu.be/ZZu23Eat72A"e/ZZu23Eat72A](https://youtu.be/ZZu23Eat72A)

This video was put together by Mark Edwardson of Cobourg as a labour of love.

The final words go to Susanne Drew: “ ‘We will remember them.’ This sentence seems so useless to me when I hear it repeated over and over. We forget so many people. Gordon must want to be remembered...”

A final footnote. Ernie Craig, Gordie’s brother died in Blenheim, Ontario, on April 24, 2024, at the age of 94, survived by his wife and two children.

Compiled by Michael Korn, current owner and occupant of the Wilson Family Farm, across the road from where the crash occurred

It is with the deepest gratitude that we honour and remember the courage and bravery of the men and women from Wellington who bravely and selflessly served our country during the First and Second World Wars. Their valor, service and sacrifices shall not be forgotten.

Lest We Forget.