

**Supplementary Radio (SUPRAD) System Oldtimers Association
Annual Reunion - 'Service of Remembrance'
26 June 2022**

Introduction

For the past two years, in 2020 and in 2021, because of the Government of Canada COVID-19 imposed restrictions, we were not able to gather together at our SUPRAD System Oldtimers Association Annual Reunion. This meant that we were not permitted to join together at the Gloucester Cairn for our Sunday morning Service of Remembrance. The last time we met here for an 'in-person' Service was 23 June 2019. Even though we were not permitted to participate in the past two years Services of Remembrance, we still posted a Service on our SUPRAD Oldtimers website. We still lovingly remembered all those Life Members, spouses and friends who passed away. This year, in addition to reading the names of all those who passed since last June, we will be reading the names of those who passed in 2020, and those who passed in 2021.

Sometimes we have a friend and we sense that our souls are very closely connected. We know that this connection is above time and space. We know that wherever we are in our lives we will always remain friends. Even if we do not see each other for years we are able to pick up right where we left off. This is what our people mean when they say 'Friends Forever'.

I have always said, and will continue to say, that our SUPRAD Annual Reunion Service of Remembrance is the most important event of our reunion week-end. We are a close knit group of life-long friends who truly care about each other. This gathering gives us the opportunity to lovingly remember, and to celebrate the lives of SUPRAD Life Members, spouses and friends who are no longer with us. Even though they have passed, because of the strong bonds of friendship that we share, we will always cherish the precious memories of the enjoyable times that were shared with them.

**Our Association
'Friends Forever'**

Since 2005, with the exception of 2020 and 2021, members of the SUPRAD Oldtimers Association have been attending Services of Remembrance at the site of the Gloucester Cairn. Before 2005, it was held at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #314 in the Village of Manotick.

For the past twenty-eight years, since 1994, thanks to the dedication and leadership of our very good friends, Wayne Moore, Butch Whitlaw, Lynn Wortman and Dave Berry, we have been privileged to be members of the SUPRAD Oldtimer's Association. Lynn Wortman recently retired and Bill Neelin volunteered to take his place. Thank you Lynn,

for your many years of loyal and dedicated service to our Association and welcome aboard to Bill. We should never forget the amount of work the committee members do for us year after year after year. There is no doubt in my mind, that we all sincerely appreciate all of their hard work and their dedication to our Association.

It's because of our Association that we have been able to keep in touch with one another from coast - to coast - to coast, and to continue to enjoy each others valuable gift of friendship. Our website was started by Irv Finkleman, and managed for many years by Jim Troyanek. Recently, it was taken over by Dave Berry, who has done a tremendous amount of work to upgrade the site. If you have not been a regular visitor to this site, you should be, because it is a great resource for keeping up-to-date on what's happening within our SUPRAD family. As well, Dave designed a 'Locator Map' for all of the Oldtimers Association Life Members.

All military and civilian personnel who proudly served a tour in the Canadian Forces Supplementary Radio System or the Canadian Forces Information Operations Group are eligible to become Life Members of our Association. When the SUPRAD Oldtimers came into existence, we started with a membership of around 600 Life Members. As of today, Butch told me that he has on his mailing list:

501 Life Members

145 non-member friends; and

18 widows who have requested to be kept informed of our happenings.

I am sure we all know someone who served with us, who for one reason or another, has not yet become a Life Member. I would encourage you to please invite them to join our proud Association. Instructions for becoming a Life Member can be found at the SUPRAD website: <https://supradoldtimers.ca/>.

During our years of military service, we were posted to several isolated and semi-isolated communities. These included Gander, Coverdale, Masset, Ladner, Bermuda, Inuvik, Aklavik, Whitehorse, Frobisher Bay, Churchill and out of country. Additionally, some of our personnel spent time at sea as Electronic Warfare (EW) operators and Special Ops personnel in support of naval operations. By becoming Life Members, we continued to remain united as brothers and sisters. We started, and completed, most of our Radioman Special trades training, as operators and as technicians, at HMCS Gloucester. In addition to our limited posting opportunities, we proudly volunteered to serve as members of Alert's 'Frozen Chosen' at the northern tip of Ellesmere Island. This small SIGINT listening post has been given the Guinness Book of World Records distinction of being the northernmost permanently inhabited place in the world.

The official motto of our Association is 'Friends Forever'. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, 'the only way to have a friend is to be one'. As members of the SUPRAD Oldtimers Association, we have LOTS OF FRIENDS! And better yet, and I say this every year because it bears repeating every year . . . when we proudly say that we are 'Friends Forever', we don't just say it, we truly and honestly MEAN IT! We are FRIENDS FOREVER!

We are affectionately called 'Oldtimers' for a good reason. Many of us can go can back thirty, forty and yes, even fifty plus years. As I said earlier, the members of the SUPRAD community are a very close-knit family. In addition to getting together during our Annual Reunions at Canadian Forces Station Leitrim, the SUPRAD Home Station, we have celebrated each other's birthdays and anniversaries and extended best wishes to those recovering from an illness. We have shared in the excitement of becoming grand-parents, great grand-parents and some even GREAT-GREAT grand-parents.

The Gloucester Cairn was built in memory of our comrades and family members and it was entirely funded through donations from the members of our SUPRAD Oldtimers Association. Mr. Van Geffen, who was born in Holland, constructed the cairn. He respected Canadians for their heroic efforts in freeing Holland in 1945. To recognize this, he placed a 1945 nickel, that he had been saving for years, in the cairn.

With Ren Molnar, acting as the Master of Ceremonies, the dedication of this Cairn took place on the 25th of June 2005.

For all those who have not read the inscription on the plaque, it reads as follows:
Opened in 1943 as a Naval Radio Station utilizing High Frequency Direction Finding to aid in the combat against German U-boats in WWII, Gloucester evolved into a military Signals Intelligence communications and training establishment. This monument is dedicated to the men and women who trained and served at this site. Their many contributions to the security of this nation must never be forgotten. In War, or in peace, it matters not, the mission does not change.

Where the plaque reads that the monument is dedicated to the men and women who trained and served at this site, women includes all of our supportive wives.

Now, let's remember our beloved SUPRAD Oldtimers Association Life Members, spouses and friends who have passed away during these past three years. For those who may not know, all those who were Life Members of our SUPRAD Oldtimers Association, are marked with small crosses on copper leaves of the Life Member Tree that is displayed in the foyer of the All Ranks Mess at Leitrim. Thank you to Lynn Wortman, and Butch Whitlaw, for the creation and installation of our SUPRAD Life Member Tree.

We will now read the names of all those who have passed away since 23 June 2019.

Rob Dunbar will read all of the names from June 2019 to June 2020.

Thank you Rob.

Ed Riplay will now read all of the names from June 2020 to June 2021.

Thank you Ed.

Wayne Moore will now read all of the names from June 2021 to June 2022.

Thank you Wayne.

In memory of all those SUPRAD Oldtimers Association Life Members, spouses and friends who are no longer with us, I would like to share this old Irish Funeral poem titled 'Remembered Joy'. One of the poems great strengths is its positive outlook told from the viewpoint of the person who has passed away, urging those left behind not to spend too much time in excessive grief. Rather, it asks that we remember the thousands of tiny moments that made life special. It speaks of a life well lived.

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free!
I follow the plan God laid for me.
I saw His face, I heard His call,
I took His hand and left it all . . .

I could not stay another day,
To love, to laugh, to work or play;
And if my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.

A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss . . .
Ah yes, these things I, too, shall miss.
My life's been full, I've savoured much:
Good times, good friends, a loved-one's touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief –
Don't shorten yours with undue grief.
Be not burdened with tears of sorrow,
Enjoy the sunshine of the morrow.

Last Post

By bugler - Charles Armstrong

Minute of Silence

Please join me now by observing one Minute of Silence to remember all those SUPRAD Life Members, spouses and friends who proudly served with the Supplementary Radio System and who have gone before us.

Lament

By piper - John Virag

Rouse

By bugler - Charles Armstrong

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Response: WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

We pray that all of our family members and friends have been welcomed into the glory of eternal life.

Please join me now in saying the Lord's Prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom
The power and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen

Final Comments / Thanks

In life and in death, the bonds of our strong friendships will never be broken. We were saddened by the loss of so many good SUPRAD family members and good friends during these past three years. We were saddened that we were not able to physically gather together in 2020 and 2021 to remember them with stories of the enjoyable and cherished times that were spent with each one of them. We are thankful that we were able to come together today to lovingly remember all those who made such a wonderful difference in our lives.

Before we are piped to brunch, I would like to say Thank You to the following people:

Our piper from the RCMP Pipes and Drums - John Virag

Our bugler from the RCMP Pipes & Drums - Charles Armstrong

For providing the sound system – Vern Veinot

For preparing the grounds around the Cairn - _____

For the Greely Legion Brunch – Lynda Wyman

And thanks to Wayne Moore, Butch Whitlaw, Bill Neelin and Dave Berry for their continued hard work and dedication towards keeping our close-knit SUPRAD family together.

Lastly, thanks to everyone who attended our Service of Remembrance. I wish you a safe and pleasant journey home.

March to Brunch

Please congregate behind our piper John Virag , and follow him as he pipes us to the Greely Legion for a delicious brunch.

'Friends Forever'

Ray Lebeau