



Lest We Forget

A Book of Remembrance

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Our Remembrance Days are a visual reminder of the sacrifices made by many men and women when our country was at war. Along with the visual history, there is a verbal history that, as the years go by, is being recounted by fewer and fewer of our veterans.

St. Paul's, in the year 2009, is privileged to have 11 living veterans: Ian Chalmers, Doug Clemens, Jack Cowle, Garth Gillespie, John Gulenchyn, George Jones, Allan McNabb, Don Munroe, Rab Reid, John Sanders and Dorothy Taylor.

Over the years, we have seen four of our veterans pass on: Ruddy Andrews, Jim Gilchrist, Roy Taylor and George Twaites. In order to keep this wonderful heritage that we have, it was decided to ask our veterans and their families to tell us of their experiences during World War II so we could create a written history that will be available for all to read. It will be a permanent record of the sacrifices they and many others made to allow us all to live in a free country.

The contents of this book are the memories of some of our veterans.

Thank you to all the Veterans for sharing their memories and stories with us. Thank you to all the Veterans and their families for the sacrifices and hardships they endured during this dark part of our history. Without them we would not have the freedom to meet for this or any other worship service. In honour of our Veterans, Veterans everywhere, and their fallen comrades, thank you.

Thank you to the people who took some time out of their schedule to help in putting together this tribute. As a small token of our appreciation, each veteran who shared their memories has received their own copy of this tribute.

Interviewers

<i>Carolyn Armstrong</i>	<i>Terry Pigden</i>
<i>Cheryl Cairns</i>	<i>Vivian Wagner</i>
<i>Dale Ferdinand-Payne</i>	<i>Rev. Lois Whitwell</i>
<i>John MacDonald</i>	

Stories, as told by our Veterans or their families, were composed by:

Nancy Bone

Graphic and Layout Design By:

Sandy Philpot

They, as our Veterans, will not be forgotten.

Tribute and Veterans' Memory Books Supplied Courtesy of:

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Ruddy Andrews

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Air Force Veteran*

of

World War II



Lest We Forget

Always
Forever



Harold Russell (Ruddy) Andrews

In Memorial

(as told by his family)

Harold Russell Andrews, nicknamed Ruddy, was born in Oshawa and worked as a Payroll Clerk at General Motors. He enlisted in the Army in October of 1942 at #2 Ordnance Depot, RCOC/CA, in Toronto.

After completing his Basic Training by January of 1943, he transferred to the Air Force in May of 1943.

While in Canada, he served at a number of stations: Mount Hope, Mountain View, Cartierville, and Mont-Joli. Later he was transferred to Topcliff, Yorkshire, UK, and various temporary airbases in Normandy. He eventually ended up at an airbase at Uetersen in Germany near Hamburg.

Ruddy served in the RCAF's 126 Wing, 416 Squadron (named City of Oshawa), a fighter squadron. When he was deployed to Yorkshire, he maintained fighters that acted as escorts for RCAF bombers. As a Leading Aircraftsman (LAC), his main responsibility was maintaining the weapons aboard Spitfires, Tempests and Typhoons, and re-arming these planes after operations.

He attended Gunnery School learning to be a gunner aboard a Fairey Battle, but did not reach the required standard apparently because his aim wasn't so good. Ruddy often said he was very fortunate serving where he did because he became aware of the casualty rate for flight crews, and especially bomber crews. He knew that had he been flight crew, the odds were against him surviving. Ruddy's most harrowing experience that he talked about was the emergency landing of a Fairey Battle with him in the gunner's position in the belly.



Ruddy witnessed a number of fighter take-offs in which the plane had barely taken off and then unexpectedly, nose-dived into the ground killing the pilot. These always left him shaken and searching for answers as to how this could happen. It was always difficult to accept that a pilot was so quickly taken from them.

When he returned home after being discharged in 1945, he was very involved in the formation of Royal Canadian Air Force Association Wing 420 at the Oshawa Airport. In retrospect, Ruddy's family feels this was an indication that, although he had seen enough tragedy in his service, he wanted to maintain the friendship and camaraderie of those with whom he served, and also provide a location to honour and remember those who did not return. The Wing still exists today.

Thank you, Ruddy, for helping to keep our pilots flying and sharing with your family the memories of those who came back from war as well as those who didn't.



Jan Chalmers

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Air Force Veteran*

*of
World War II*





Lest We Forget

Ian Chalmers

Ian was born and raised in Oshawa, Ontario and at only 18 years old, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. He always dreamed of being a pilot, even though he had been a Sea Cadet and a Cadet in the Ontario Regiment.

His basic training started in Aylmer, Ontario and then on to Quebec for more training. He was a member of the 423rd RCAF with the rank of Leading Air Craftsman stationed in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

His job was on the ground helping to keep the planes in the air. He did general maintenance including building practice bombing ranges. He also worked in the stock room for airplane parts. One other important job was as a signal man on the runways.

Another skill he had was he knew how to drive a snow plow. When this was discovered, the next thing he knew he was clearing snow off the runways.

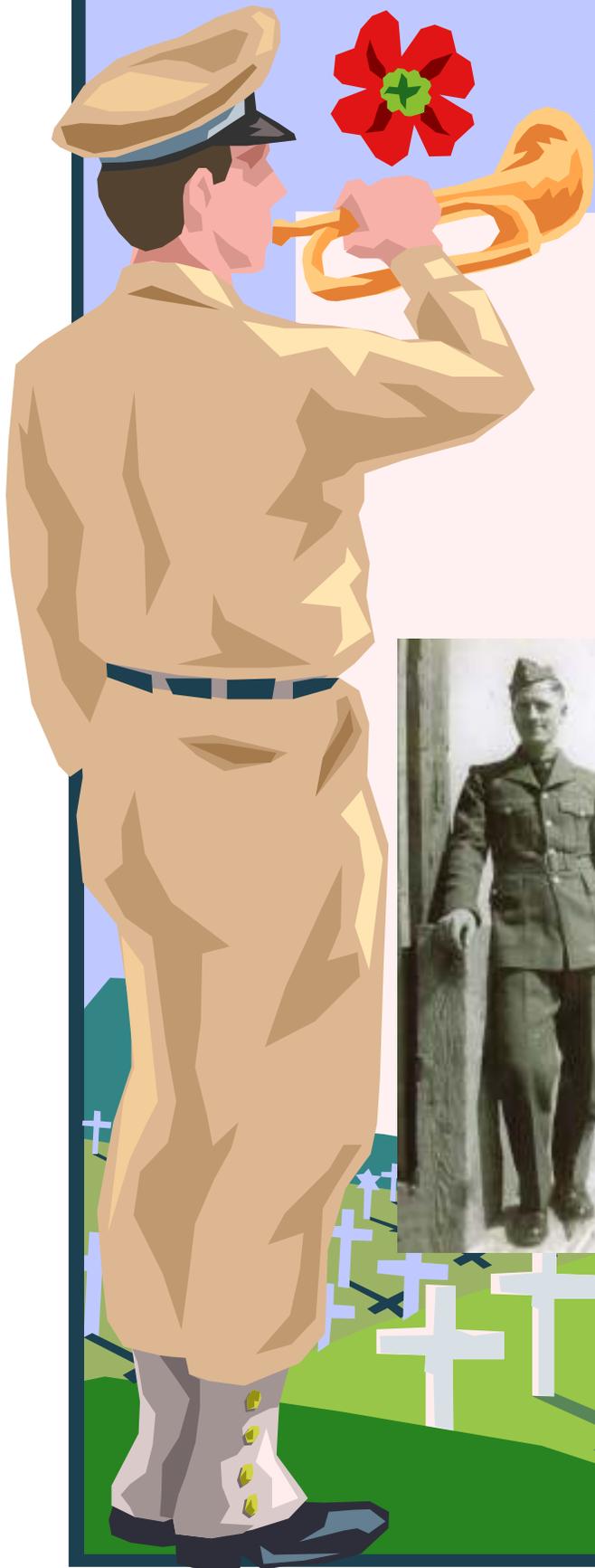
While stationed in Nova Scotia, he took the opportunity to travel around the province getting to know the countryside and the people. He took advantage of his days off to do this traveling knowing he may never get the opportunity to see this part of the country again.

When the war ended, he held the rank of Corporal and stayed on as a clerk with the job of completing the Discharge Papers for returning Airmen. He was one of the last six servicemen to be discharged from the Dartmouth Base.



Ian never did achieve his dream to fly as God had other plans for him. The jobs he did were important as they kept the airplanes in the air. Without those working on the ground, the pilots who did fly would not have been able to do their job.

Thank you, Ian, for the important job of keeping our pilots flying and thank you for serving to protect us here in Canada.



Jack Cowle

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Infantry Veteran*

of

World War II





Lest We Forget

Jack Cowle

Jack joined the Royal Canadian Infantry Reserves in 1936 as a member of the Bowmanville Unit as well as the Tank Corp Ontario Regiment in Oshawa. When the war started in 1939, his Regiment was called up and Jack assumed he would go to war. To his surprise, he was never called to go. He tried three times to sign up but each time he was turned down and never given a reason. Jack grew more frustrated as people knew he was in the Reserves and yet not in uniform.

Unknown to Jack, his boss at the Bowmanville Foundry had him declared essential. Finally, a man came down from Ottawa to inform him he was essential, therefore he could not become part of the regular Army.

Jack wasn't prepared to give up. So when he heard of a new recruitment office opening in Port Hope, he was first in line when the doors opened. This time he was successful. The doctors checked him out right then and there and marked him 100%.

He was given a travel voucher and was on his way. First to Toronto, then on the next train to Halifax and soon he found himself walking up the gang plank to board the Queen Elizabeth bound for England. The ship set sail with 25,000 soldiers on board. They had just left the dock when they were called back as an American ship had been torpedoed off the coast of Nova Scotia. The men from that ship were put onto the QE. This meant adding another 5,000 soldiers to an already overcrowded ship. There wasn't any room to move. Everyone slept wherever they could find a spot on the 4 day trip.

Jack tells a funny story about arriving at the dock in Glasgow, Scotland. When he walked down the gang plank, he fell off taking all his equipment with him, including his \$100 rifle. When they pulled him out of the water, his gun was gone. He was told the gun was his responsibility and he would have to pay for it. Somewhere along the line, it was forgotten about and he never did pay.



The men from the ship were transported to Aldershott, England. Upon arrival, they were called to stand on the large parade ground. There were close to 1,000 men gathered in groups. When each man heard his name called he went to his assigned Unit. When the last name was called, there, in the middle of parade ground, was Jack standing all alone. He went up to the Sergeant and said, "What about me?" The Sergeant looked at him and said, "You go where you were told." Jack said "My name wasn't called." It was soon discovered Jack's paperwork had not followed him. With no paperwork, the Army claimed he had jumped on board in Halifax and that he would be sent home.

While discussing the situation, a Captain from the 48th Highlanders came into the office wanting volunteers to go to North Africa. Of course, Jack volunteered. He was determined to get in the war one way or another.

No paperwork meant no proof of him having the necessary vaccinations for Africa, which meant more needles. Now it was off to North Africa. Once again, he met head on with the lack of records. It was decided to send him back to Canada via New York through the American Air Force when serendipity happened again. An Officer came in wanting volunteers to go to Ortona, Italy, so off went Jack.

While at Ortona, a serious incident happened which changed Jack's war plans. A Patrol was sent to search out a nest of Germans. For some reason, a Captain went with them. When the Patrol didn't return, the Colonel sent another Patrol to see what had happened. Jack was part of the second Patrol. As this Patrol got close to where the first Patrol should be, some of the men went ahead while Jack, the Sergeant and one other soldier stood rear guard. As they watched, a flash from the shelling lit up the sky revealing the Patrol surrounded by Germans. They realized no shots could be fired at the Germans without hitting their own men. As they watched, the two men with Jack decided to retreat. Before Jack could do anything he found a gun in his back. Unfortunately, the Sergeant and the other Soldier were killed and Jack was captured. He later learned that the Germans had set up an ambush knowing someone would come for the Captain.



After his capture, Jack was taken to a school where he was held prisoner with 255 other captured soldiers. Food was scarce and Jack lost over 100 pounds and had to be hospitalized for malnutrition. Once in better shape, he was sent to a POW Camp just outside of Munich, Germany. There were 80 separate compounds with 1,000 men in each compound. Jack was in a compound with other Canadians.

One day Jack got a surprise. One of the German guards asked if he had a girlfriend and would he like to write a letter to her. At first, he was reluctant to write it as he was afraid it would be used for propaganda. After talking it over with some of his fellow prisoners, it was decided that if he wrote as if Amy was sitting beside him, there would be no harm. So he wrote the letter but never heard anything else about what happened to it.

Every Friday was a special day at the camp as boxes from the Red Cross were handed out. These packages contained coffee, tea, chocolate, socks, uniforms and the most valuable item, cigarettes. Jack soon discovered cigarettes were as good as money and could be bartered for almost anything. Jack quit smoking. Cigarettes would get you a hair cut, your clothes washed and access to any of the other compounds.

Every night the British bombed Munich, so everyday the prisoners were taken from the POW Camp into Munich to clean up the rubble.

On these day trips to Munich, the Prisoners were served this awful soup out of huge big tanks on the back of trucks. The prisoners were able to bribe the guards with cigarettes to let them eat in a café where they asked the people for bread and said the magic word, "cigarettes". The bread was brought back to the camp and traded for more cigarettes. Jack was very creative in keeping his stash of food and cigarettes safe. Sleeping on the top bunk, he hid his stash in the ceiling using condensed milk as glue to keep the hole sealed shut.



Jack had formed a friendship with one of the guards and on special occasions offered the guard his most valued possession, cigarettes. He also shared his chocolate and coffee with the guard's little girl and wife. The guard returned the friendship by sneaking him out of the camp one night, taking him to the railway station, hiding him in a boxcar and telling him to take the morning train to Paris. Unfortunately, Jack fell asleep and the next thing he knew he was being roughly awakened and hauled off to Civilian Jail in Berlin.

His interrogators kept insisting he speak German but Jack couldn't speak a word of the language. One of his interrogators spoke English and explained the confusion. Jack's last name, when spelled with a K instead of a C, is a German name so it was assumed he was a spy. After two weeks in jail, he was released and sent back to the POW Camp.

In early 1945, the Allied Forces and the Russian Force were advancing into Germany coming up to Munich on opposite sides of the City. As these forces got closer, the Germans decided to use the prisoners as shields hoping these Forces wouldn't shoot at their own soldiers. The prisoners were moved up to the front. In one of the little towns just outside Munich, the mayor negotiated with Jack and his fellow prisoners for them to talk to the 11th Armored Division just over the hill asking them not to bomb his town if he let the prisoners go. They were freed by the 11th Armored Division who bombed the town anyway.

The freed captives were taken to Paris and eventually back to Aldersott, England. Jack returned to Halifax on the Ile de France with hundreds of other prisoners and injured soldiers. The ship docked in Halifax on June 28, 1945. Jack was put on a train and sent to Kingston where the love of his life, Amy, was waiting for him.



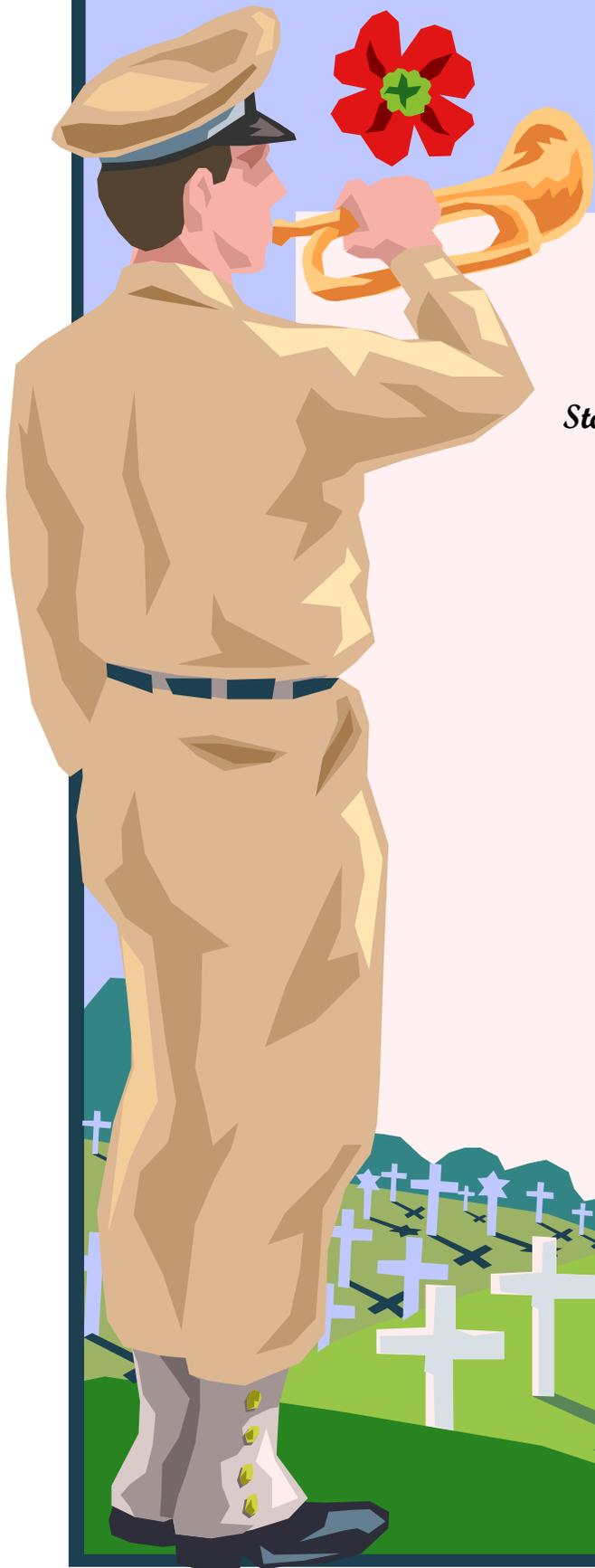
Amy then told him the story of the letter. It seems the letter had been read on the shortwave radio and a Mrs. White in Arkansas heard the broadcast, copied down the letter, found out who Amy was and sent the letter to her. Jack's mother had been receiving the Missing in Action payments given to all soldiers' families. Then, for some reason they stopped. With Jack's letter, Amy was able to prove he was still alive and his mother's payments were reinstated.

Jack had difficulty getting into the Army and now that he was home, he had difficulty getting out. The Army wouldn't discharge him until he had proof of a job. He wasn't able to go back to his old job so he got a job at General Motors.

Jack had been away from his love for so long he didn't want to waste any more time. He and Amy were married on July 12th, 1945.

Jack firmly believes that through this interesting journey, God was with him all the way.

Thank you, Jack, for sharing your most interesting story. All of us would agree, God was definitely with you.

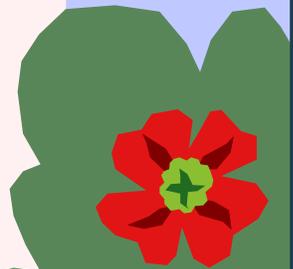
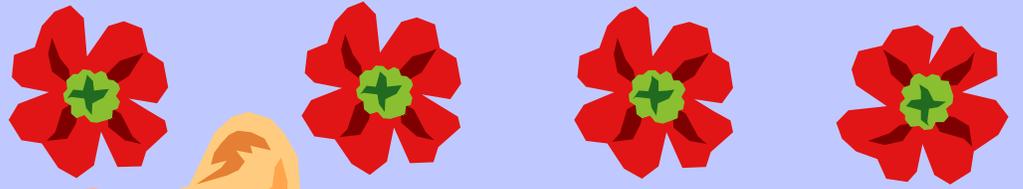


James Gilchrist

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Infantry Veteran*

of

World War II



Always
Forever



Lest We Forget

Rev. James Gilchrist

In Memorial

(as told by his daughter)

Jim tried to join the Royal Canadian Infantry in 1939 but he had broken his arm when he was a young teenager and the arm hadn't set just right so they turned him down.

He waited until 1941 to try and sign up again when he was 29 and the Army really needed volunteers. This time he was accepted. During Basic Training, the other soldiers called him "Pop" as he was so much older than them.

Jim was set to be deployed to Italy but he was held back. Then he was suppose to go to France but that got changed as well and he didn't go. Later he heard many of his friends who went overseas in those two groups had been killed. He was amazed he had been held back both times. In the end he was stationed in Aldershott, England.

Jim was assigned to Ordinance. Ordinance had the job of loading the trucks with ammunition and supplies. He said it took three days, working twenty-four hours a day, to get the trucks ready for D-Day.

One thing Jim was grateful for was, when on leave, he was able to visit his father's family in Scotland. Being stationed in England granted him the joy of seeing family he would otherwise never have met.

Canadian soldiers had patches on their shoulders with Canada written on them. While in England, he said he had never seen so many people so proud to see soldiers. People on the buses or trains would insist on the Canadian soldiers taking their seats.



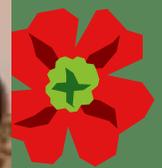
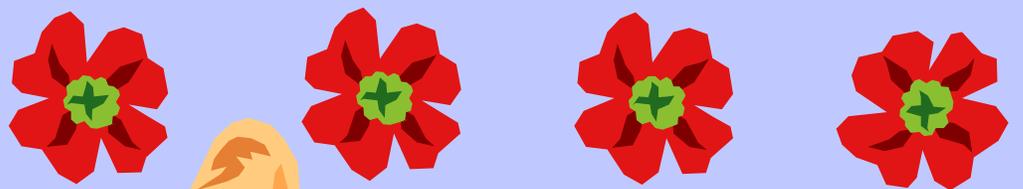
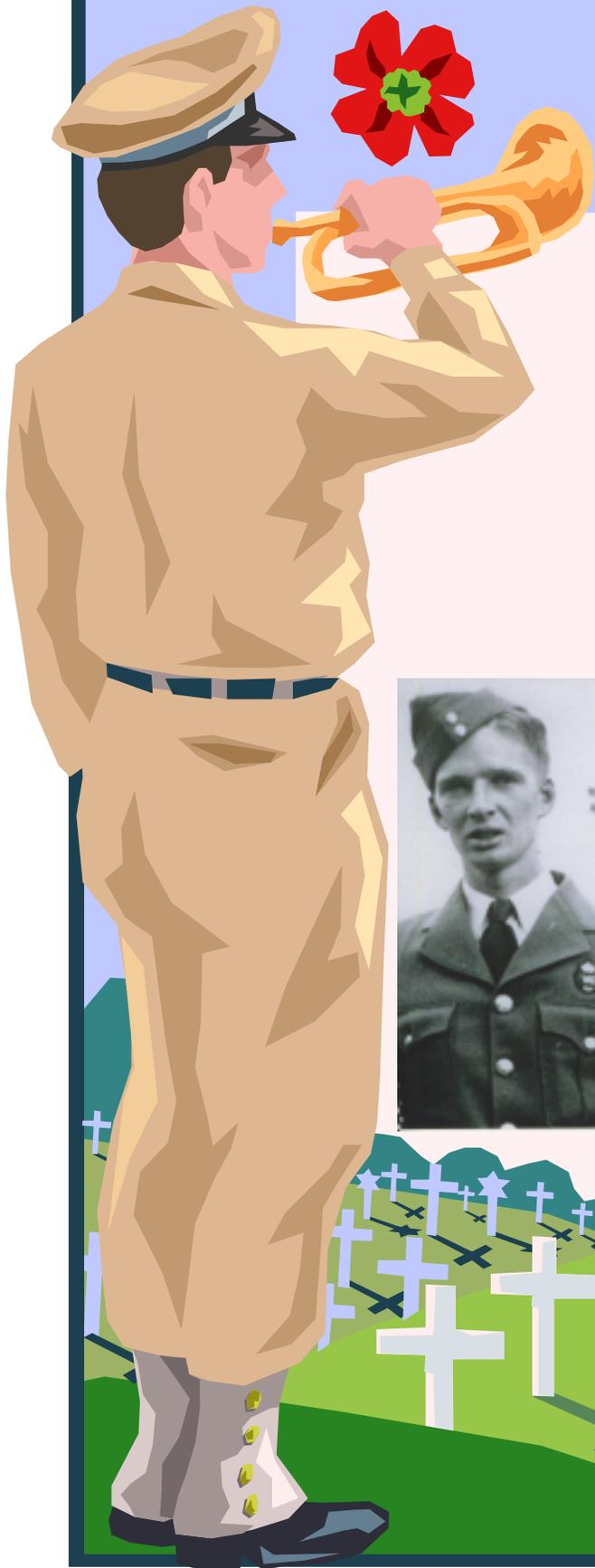
He remembers one older woman on a bus who insisted on him taking her seat saying, "You need to sit down Canada, you came to help us".

Jim's faith was strong through his service time and his life. He believed that God gave him the strength to do what he had to do.

Jim was discharged in late 1945 or early 1946.

After his discharge, Jim went on to become a Presbyterian Minister.

Thank you, Rev. James, for your contribution to the war effort. God truly was with you.



Garth Gillespie
Story of a Royal Canadian
Air Force Veteran
of
World War II





Lest We Forget

Garth G. Gillespie

Garth, a native of Galt, ON, enlisted at the age of 19. Garth's father died when he was 5 years old and it was just assumed that the boys would join some part of the Armed Services. Garth, and two of his brothers, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, while his other brother joined the army.

Garth joined the RCAF in Hamilton and took his basic training at Mountain View Base near Trenton, ON. He then was sent to study at Guelph College to train as a wireless operator and learned Morse Code. He also took courses in Quebec and Yarmouth. He became a WAG, air force slang for Wireless Air Gunner, with a North Atlantic Squadron which covered convoys.

The plane he flew in was a Canso which is an amphibious aircraft, so he was always based around the Atlantic Ocean. He was very proud of flying in a Canso plane which was stationed at Summerside, PEI.

It was the crew's responsibility to fly over the North Atlantic protecting Canada from any attempt of the enemy to enter Canadian waters. His squadron received a citation for diverting a German Submarine on route to Canada. His pilot, a Presbyterian, shared his faith. Sometimes it was difficult to believe, but Garth knew he had something and this best describes the comfort that he felt from his inner thoughts.

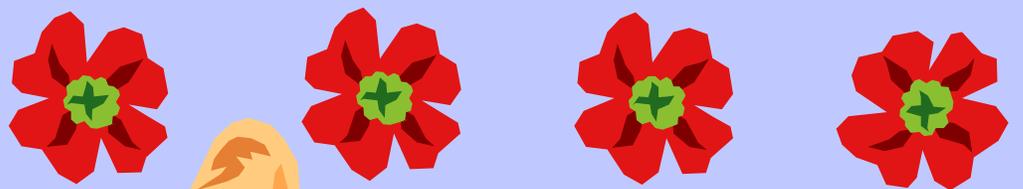
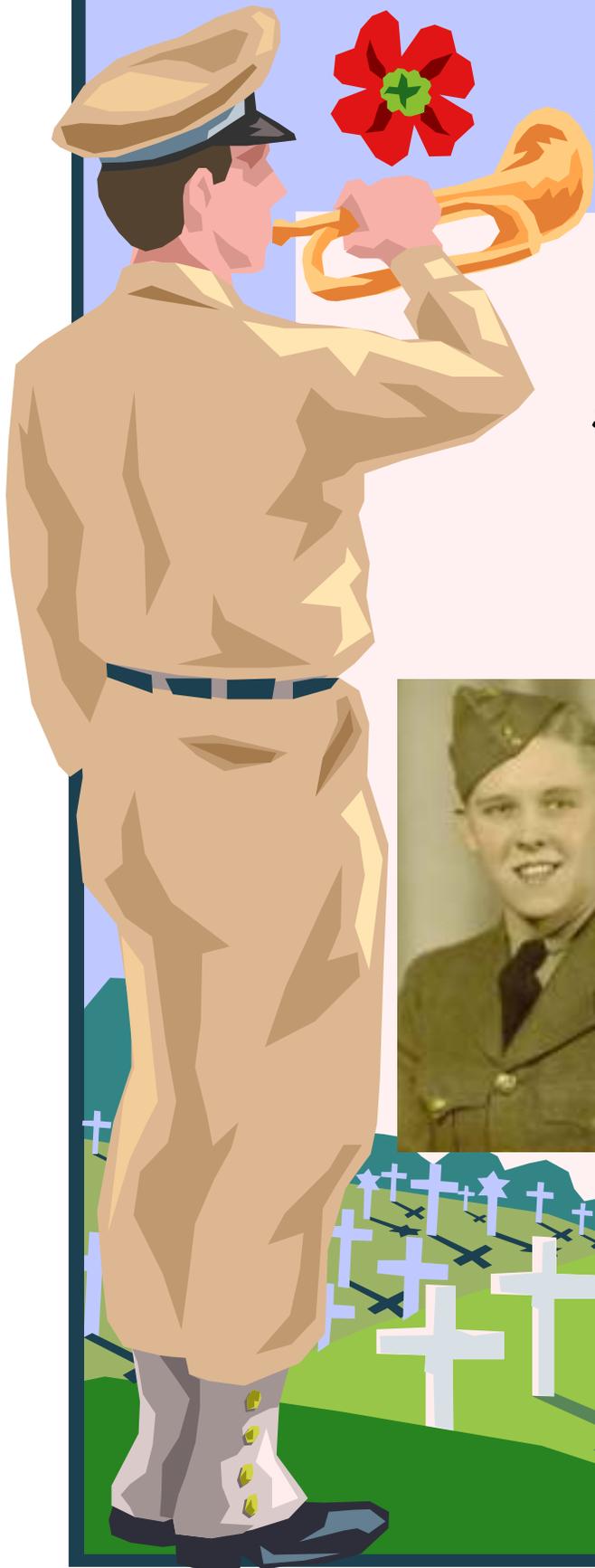
He was in Halifax on the day that VE (Victory in Europe) was declared. He saw the riots and looting in Halifax after VE was declared to the population.



Garth never was "overseas" in Europe or Japan but his squadron was like the merchant marines, protecting our country and convoys, as well as moving supplies and troops. Garth speaks highly of his Air Group and attended their 50th year reunion. He has also met some of his crew members on other occasions.

He was discharged after VJ Day (Victory over Japan) in 1945 after 4 ½ years of service. Garth never shows off his medals as he doesn't want to overshadow other vets. He doesn't want to look like he is boasting.

Garth has every right to boast and thank you for helping to protect our country.



George Jones
Story of a Royal Canadian
Infantry Veteran
of
World War II





Lest We Forget

George Jones

It was war time and George joined the Royal Canadian Infantry in 1942 when he was 20 years old.

George was sent to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, where he was trained as an Artillery Gunner. While he was in training, it was discovered he had a medical condition which prevented him from being shipped overseas.

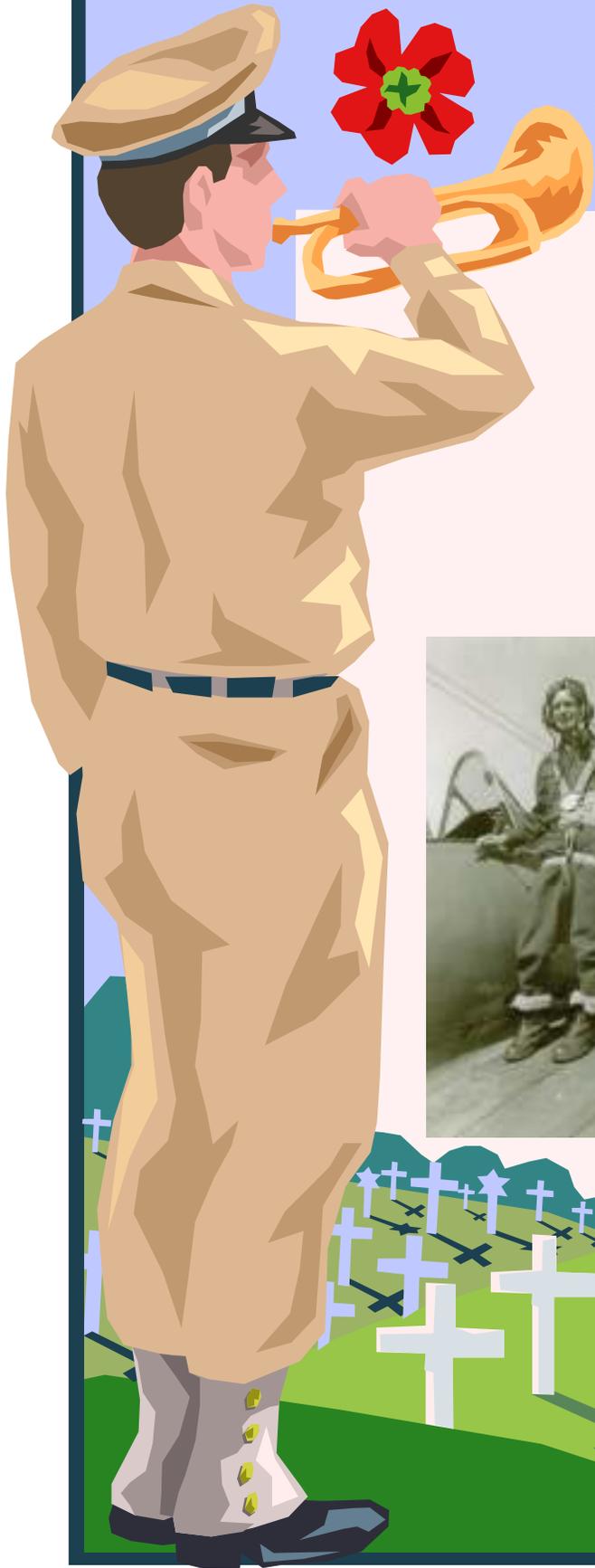
Even with this medical condition, the Army would not discharge him which would have been George's choice. He really wanted to go where the action was and where all the other soldiers were going. The Army had other plans for him to contribute to the war effort. He was sent to Toronto and then out to Western Canada.

Because able-bodied men were volunteering or being conscripted, this left many vacant jobs, usually done by men, being filled by women to do the heavy labour. An important part of the war effort was to supply food to the population and our soldiers, so being conscripted and sent to a farm was an important part of winning the war.

With food at a shortage, the Army sent George out West to be a Farmer. Many soldiers who were not able to be shipped overseas were sent out West to farm.

It may not have been George's choice but it was a very essential job. Without the food needed to feed our Army both here and abroad, as well as the civilian population, the outcome of the war could have been very different.

Thank you, George, for your contribution to the war effort and thank you for keeping us fed.



Don Munroe

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Air Force Veteran*

of

World War II





Lest We Forget

Don Munroe

Don didn't think his Air Force stories would be all that exciting to members of St. Paul's Church. His time spent in the Royal Canadian Air Force was a very exciting time for a young man who had not been away from his home in London, Ontario until that time.

Right after joining the RCAF in 1942, he was sent to the old Normal School in Toronto to take his initial training. In the winter of 1942, he was sent to Goderich, Ontario, to learn to fly.

When Don had only 11 or 12 flying hours, he was sent on his first solo flight to the Kitchener-Waterloo Airport. On the way there, he flew through sunlight and repeated snow squalls. On the return flight, the snow squall changed to a complete blizzard and he had to let down to around 100 feet so he could see the ground. He kept flying by compass course until he reached Georgian Bay where he recognized the countryside just north of the airport. He turned south and flew for five minutes until he saw the rotating beacon at the Goderich Airport and landed safely on the snowy runway. This certainly tested all Don's flying skills.

After graduating from Goderich, he was transferred to Aylmer, Ontario to learn to fly more complex aircraft like the Yale and Harvard. Don graduated as a pilot with the rank of Sergeant in the spring of '42.

At his graduation, he was presented with his wings by Billy Bishop, V.C., the World War 1 flying ace. What an honour!





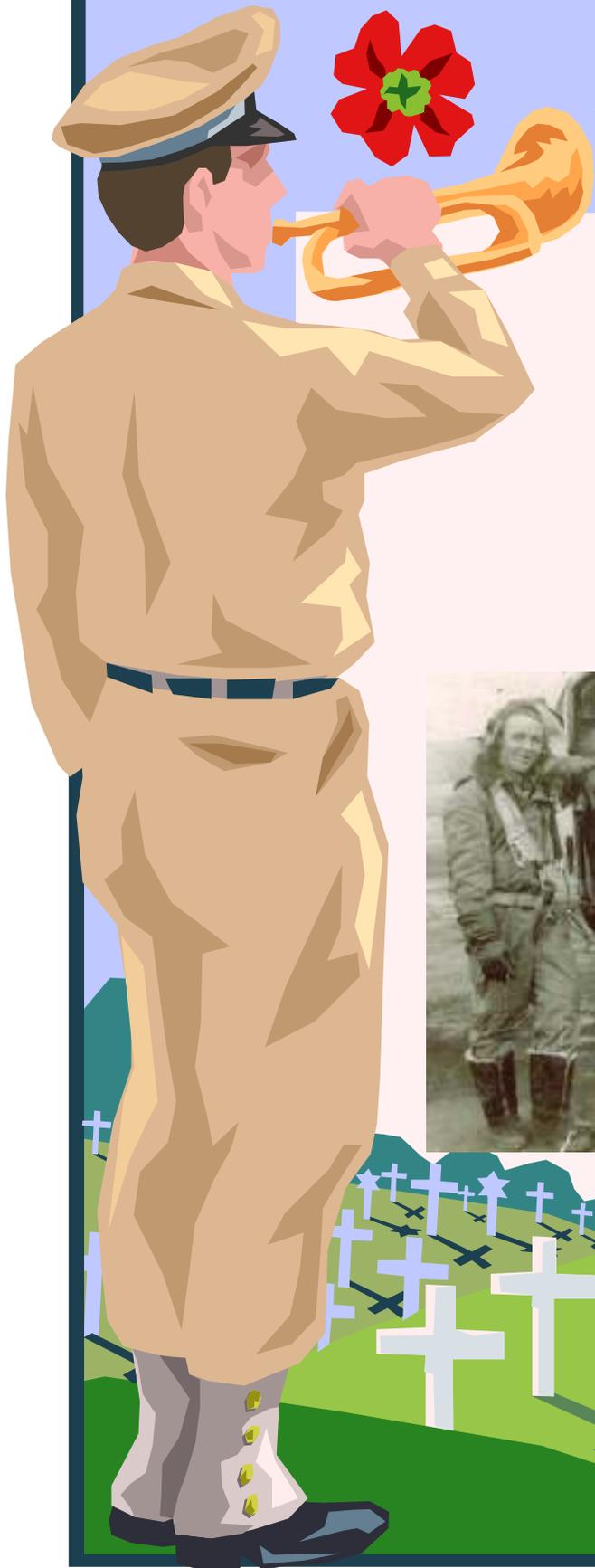
After receiving his wings, he was sent to instructor's school at Arnprior, Ontario. He completed his course and was assigned Flying Instructor at the Oshawa Airport. His contribution to the World War II war effort was mainly as flying instructor in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan at #2 EFTS at the Oshawa Airport. He trained many young men to fly.

He received his commission and was sent overseas and flew fighters for a year. While he was there, his wife, Isabelle, worked in the GM Aircraft plant where they built the famous Dehavilland Mosquito. This was the fastest plane in the aircraft arsenal at that time.

One special story Don likes to share is about the night he was the Duty Officer in the control tower. He was sitting there with all the lights on in the tower when a JU 188 long range fighter came across the airfield shooting 20 mm cannon as he came. Don was sure he was shooting at him because the tracers looked as though they were coming right at him. Actually, the plane was shooting at the railway station at Banbury just down the road. Don waited expecting the plane to come back and shoot him but it didn't come. Don speculated the pilot was thinking about the long trip back to Germany.

When the war was over in Europe, Don was to train to fly off an aircraft carrier and then be assigned to the Asian Theatre to fight the Japanese. When he reached Montreal on the way home, the VJ (Victory over Japan) celebrations were on and the war was at an end.

Don, thank you for the very interesting stories and thank you for fighting for us so we can be here to worship at St. Paul's.



Rab Reid

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Air Force Veteran*

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Lest We Forget

Rab Reid

On his way into Toronto to sign up to join the Royal Canadian Air Force, Rab stopped to visit his Grandmother and to tell her what he was going to do. His father found out he was planning to sign up and knew Rab would need his permission as he was only 17 ½ years old. To Rab's disappointment, his father said no.

Rab wasn't about to give up. On his second trip into Toronto to sign up, he avoided going to his Grandmother's place and signed up.

Mountain View, near Trenton, and Lachine, Quebec, were two of the bases where he trained. Summerside, PEI was the next stop in his training. The winter weather didn't allow for many clear flying days. In order to get his flying time in, he was sent to Portage La Prairie, Alberta where he earned his wings.

Rab also trained as a rear gunner and flew twelve missions on a Lancaster bomber. He flew on many different airplanes: the Dakota, Ferry Battle, and the Wellington just to name a few.

Rab was sent to Montreal University and McGill University for some special training. He learned Morse Code, wireless operation for the air crew and Aldis, a signaling device for optical communication.

He was posted to Honeybum, an RAF Base in Scotland, to be part of the Operations Training Unit. On his first day there, one of their Wellington Planes crashed on take off. This scared the heck out of him.

Rab's next posting was with the 428 Ghost Squadron in Yorkshire, England.



Rab likes to share the following stories:

When he was in PEI during those stormy winter days, two soldiers from their Unit were chosen to go down the long snowy road to pick up the mail. This was a job everyone tried to avoid even though they liked reading the letters from home.

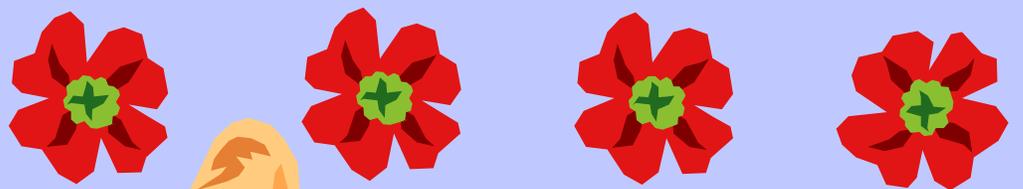
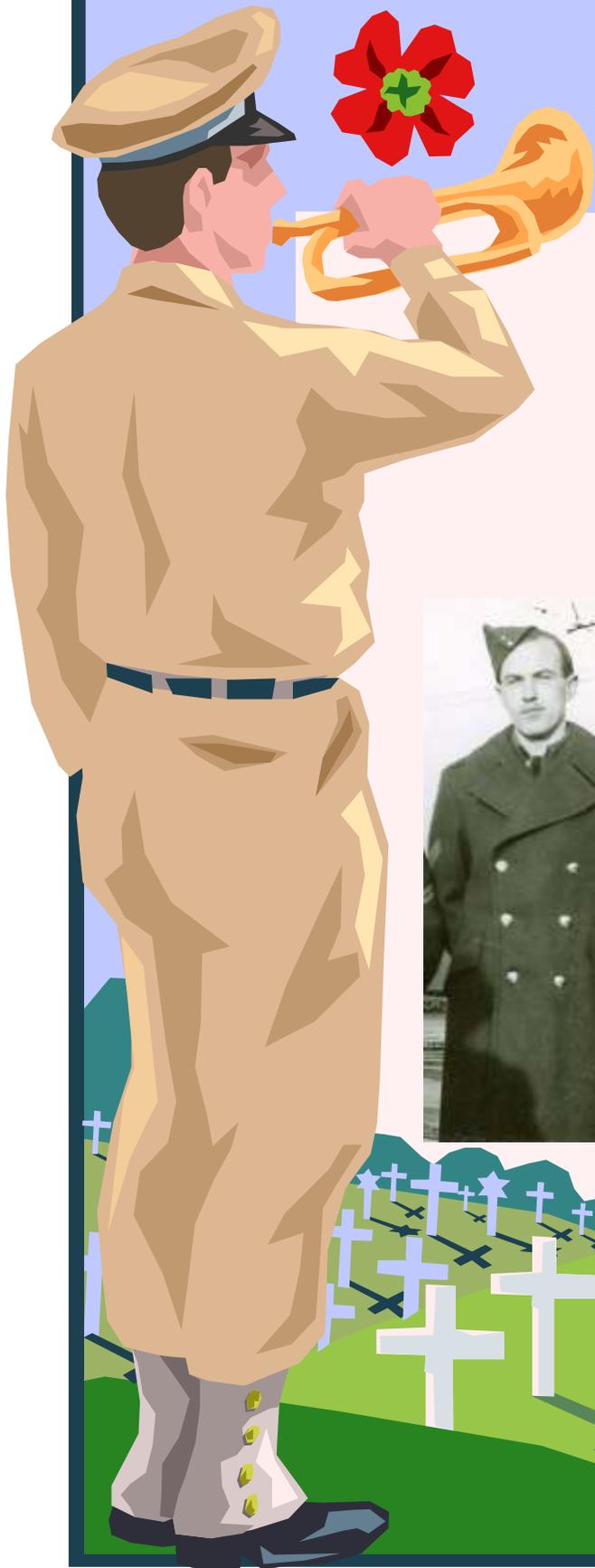
He remembers the train trip to Portage La Prairie when the RCAF personnel got to travel 1st Class which didn't go over too well with the rest of the troops.

His favourite story is about a car. One of his friends dated a girl from the area and it seemed her family was well to do. They had an extra car which they loaned to the young man. He willingly shared his good fortune with the crew of six. Each was assigned a day that they could use the car. Of course, gas was rationed making it very hard to get. You know young men will always find a way to get what they need. So, Rab being resourceful, found a way to buy gas from a construction crew which had gas for their large equipment on the base.

Word spread quickly and he became the go between for gas. One day, the CO of the base called Rab into a meeting. Of course, he thought he was in trouble. The CO said he had heard the rumour that Rab was able to get gas for their car. Rab played innocent replying he had heard the same rumour. The CO went on to say he would be leaving for the South of England and would need gas for the trip and made sure Rab knew his car. The CO said he expected the tank to be filled and a few extra gerry cans full of gas would make his trip much more enjoyable. Rab just said "Yes Sir" and it happened.

Through heavy seas in the North Atlantic, Rab returned to Canada in March 1946. He was transported to Lachine, Quebec where he was discharged from the RCAF.

Thank you, Rab, for sharing your stories and thank you for protecting us.



John Sanders

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Infantry Veteran*

of

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Lest We Forget

John Sanders

John was 20 years old when he enlisted at District Depot 2, in the Horse Palace at the Exhibition Grounds in Toronto, Ontario. He was a newlywed having married Marion just one month before. John was born in Oshawa, in a house where El Stavros Restaurant now stands.

He joined the Royal Canadian Infantry, Canadian Postal Corp. He went to Newmarket to do his Basic Training and then on to Ottawa for three months of extra training. His final assignment was in the Main Postal Depot in the Federal Building in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He was a Private on signing up and was discharged in 1945 as a Sergeant.

John's job was to sort the mail according to the different Regimental Headquarters both in Canada and overseas. He then supervised loading it onto the ships. The mail had to meet certain regulations. John was always amazed at the number of times things, such as whiskey in glass bottles, had to be held back from shipping. Unfortunately, the glass bottles had a tendency to break, so could not be shipped. He remembers the mess made by one package which had whiskey and bread in it and, of course, the bottle broke leaking all over the rest of the mail.

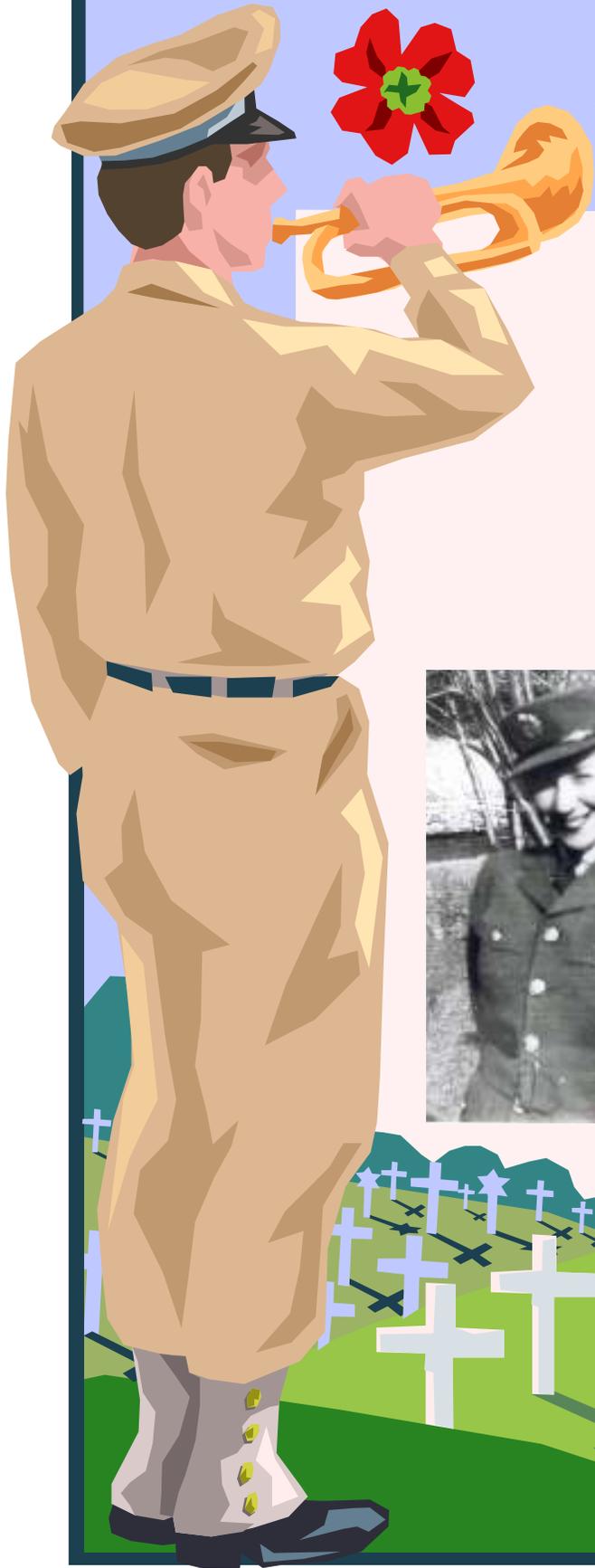
John was also asked to help unload the trains coming in with food and supplies. These supplies had to get to the docks so the stevedores could load them onto the ships. Many of the big troop and supply ships came into port while he was stationed in Halifax. He saw the Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mary and the Ile de France.

The story John shared was the time there was an explosion at the Naval Armament Base in Bedford near Halifax. It happened at night and because of all the destruction, the soldiers could not get back to their barracks. John had to spend the night in a '36 Dodge.



John feels every job, no matter how small, was important during war time. His job was to ensure the soldiers received their letters from home. He is sure the service men appreciated what he did.

John, we are sure if those service men were here today, they would thank you for keeping them in touch with their families. We thank you for the job you did, as communication, during this time, was so important, both to the soldiers away from home and those at home.



Dorothy Taylor

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Air Force Veteran*

*of
World War II*





Lest We Forget

Dorothy Taylor

Dorothy, a young 20 year old, joined the Royal Canadian Air Force to be part of the 2nd World War, a war which would change young lives forever.

Her father was deeply upset as he was afraid she might suffer, due to her German name, Schicks, but no mention was made of it during her time in the service. Her Mother was also upset because she was leaving home so young.

Dorothy remembers the pride she had in her blue uniform and how she detested those pink wool underpants that were "Air Force Issue".

Dorothy was assigned to the second Flight of Women's Division and did her Basic Training at Rockcliffe Station outside Ottawa. She remembers being homesick at times. The training was rigorous not only physically but academically with classroom studying and exams on general Air Force Administration. One of the hardest things for Dorothy while in training, was not being allowed off the station for at least the first two weeks.

Dorothy shares a funny story about the first evening she was allowed off the Station. She had been drilled to salute everything in brass and gold braid. She was walking down the street in Ottawa and noticed a gentleman dressed up in great regalia with gold tassels and a nice uniform. She automatically saluted. On walking further down the street, she heard snickers behind her and was informed she had just saluted the doorman of the hotel.

After Basic Training, Dorothy was posted to #4 Bombing and Gunnery School at Fingal, Ontario. She was one of the first squadron of girls to be posted to that station. She was classified as Air Women II Class and assigned to General Duties without much training. Dorothy was given the job of Station Librarian.



Dorothy was transferred to Halifax Eastern Air Command and assigned as Fighter and Filter Operation Clerk which involved working on the Operations Board. She had not had any training for this but picked up the work very quickly and did her job to the best of her ability.

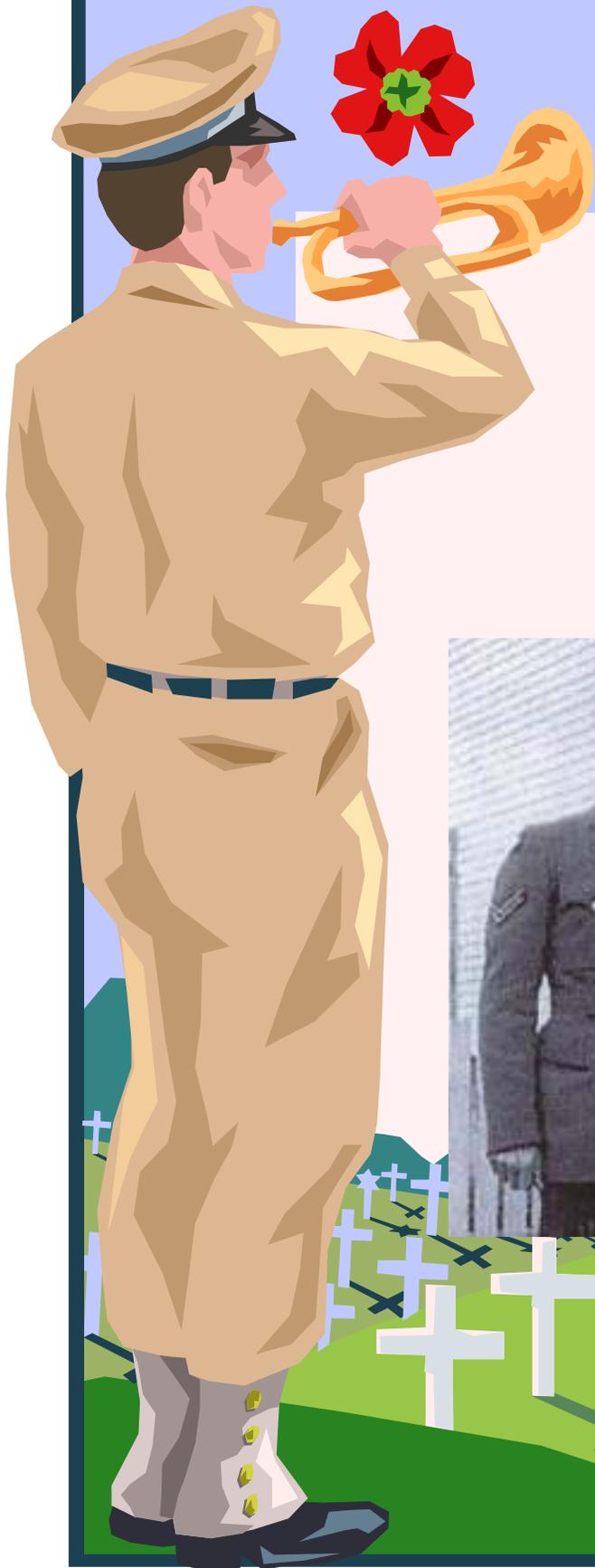
Another story Dorothy likes to share is about being appointed pianist in many USO shows playing to the troops. When a pianist was needed for a show anywhere, she was on call and transported to take part in the entertainment. On a particular Sunday afternoon, she was invited to visit a British ship to entertain. The ship was anchored three miles out and she was picked up by three young servicemen in a whaling boat and taken out to the ship in very rough and choppy water. It was February and very cold. She was dressed in her regular uniform and trench coat. Arriving at the ship, she was informed she would have to climb an icy chain ladder in order to get aboard. She says she will never forget that experience of climbing aboard the ice-covered ship with the sea below. She climbed that icy ladder with one hand, while trying to hold down her skirt with the other and the Navy officers telling her not to look down. So much for self-pride.

Another time she was sent to play at an event at a hostel. A Russian ship was in port and the crew was attending the show. They asked her to play "The Blue Danube". She did and when she was finished they all made a great rush for the piano. She was so nervous, she jumped up and ran off the stage scared half out of her wits. Later, she was informed they merely wanted her to play some more, as they greatly appreciated her music.

Dorothy shared one of the things that bothered her during her time in the RCAF. When the black servicemen were fighting or working on the ships, they were treated as equals with the white servicemen. But, the minute they were off duty, they were not allowed into the canteen to relax with their buddies and have a beer. She saw how unfair this was.

Dorothy knows her strong faith helped her through those war years.

Thank you, Dorothy, for your contribution and for giving our servicemen some cheer in a time of war.



Roy Taylor

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Always
Forever



Lest We Forget

Rev. Roy Taylor

In Memorial

(as told by his wife Dorothy)

Roy joined the Royal Canadian Air Force when he turned 20.

He took his Basic Training in Fingal, Ontario and was then transferred to Halifax and Newfoundland. There, he met and married his sweetheart, Dorothy.

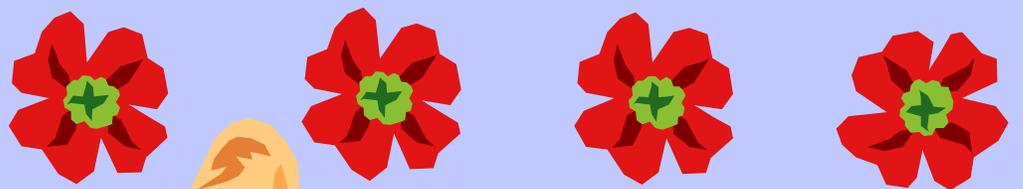
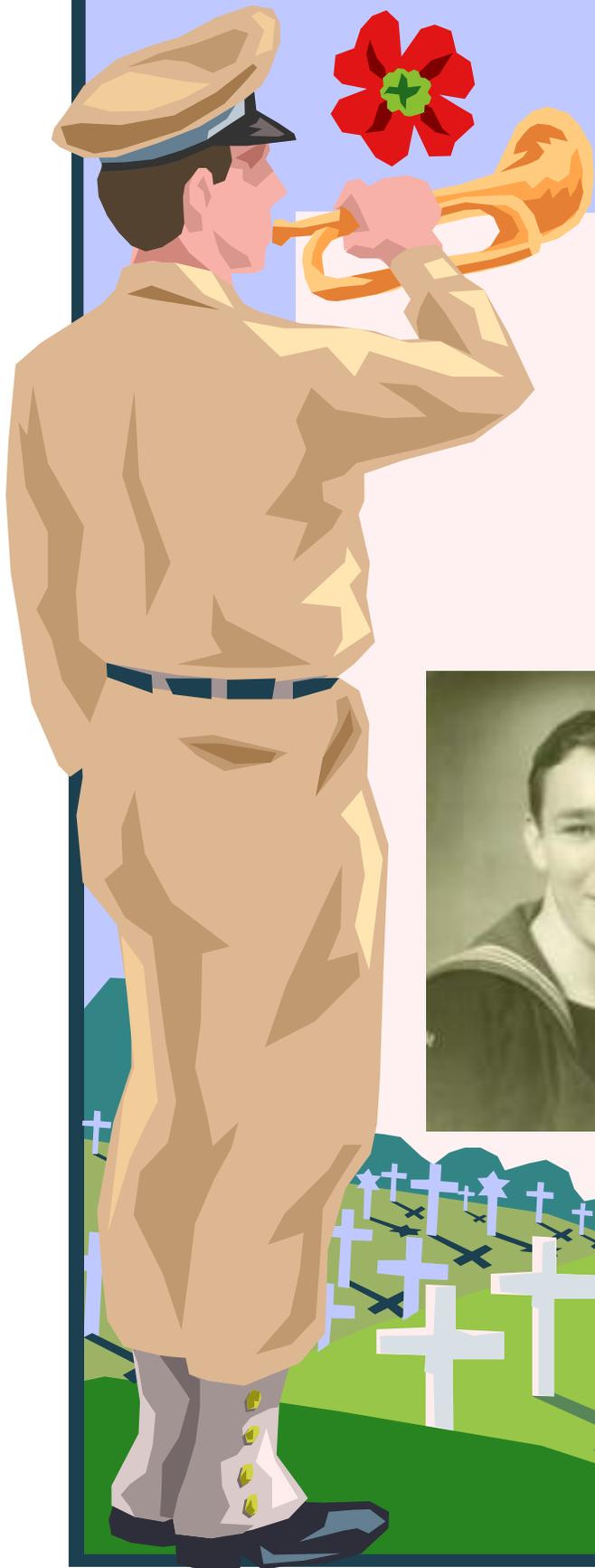
Roy was an Administrative Sergeant and Station Warrant Officer during the war. When the war ended, Roy decided to remain in the Air Force. He maintained the rank of Station Warrant Officer during his lifetime of service. He served at various bases all across Canada.

Roy had a strong faith which carried him through his time in the Air Force and his life in civilian ranks.

After Roy retired from the Air Force, he missed the camaraderie and his uniform. He decided to wear a different uniform for the remainder of his life. He enrolled in Knox College and in 1970 he graduated and was ordained as a Presbyterian Minister. He had a new uniform and new comrades in arms with the same common goal.

Roy and his wife, Dorothy, settled in Bowmanville after he retired from the ministry.

Thank you, Roy, for all those years of service to our country.



George Twaites

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Lest We Forget

George Twaites In Memorial

(as told by his wife Kathleen)

George went to Toronto with his friend to enlist in the Royal Canadian Navy. They had both been Sea Cadets and George was a member of the Bugle Band.

They stood in a long line with many other young men waiting to sign up. While in line, an Officer and his aid came out and announced they needed a bugler. George spoke up and said, "I play." He was handed a bugle and told to play. This was his entry into the Royal Canadian Navy.

It was discovered he was only 17½ years old so he needed his father's permission to join the Navy. He went home, got the form signed and in June 1942 signed up.

George was sent to Cornwall, Ontario for his training. While there, he served as Duty Bugler.

During this time, he studied to be a Radar Operator and as soon as he turned 18 he was sent to sea on Radar Duty.

George always referred to this time as "Sailing the High Seas". He traveled in the convoys going from Halifax to Ireland and back. He never talked much about the actual work he did as part of the convoy escort in the North Atlantic.

George was discharged in 1945 and he liked to say he was in the Navy 3 years, 3 months, 7 days and 7 hours. He figured this out on the day he was discharged.

Thank you, George, for helping to protect the troop ships with all those soldiers on board. Thank you for keeping us all safe.