

# Honouring a fallen colleague

By Danielle McPherson

From coast to coast, Canadians gathered to honour those who fought for our rights and freedoms, and those still serving Canada.

The Huntsville Legion, Branch 232, had a large crowd at last Friday's Remembrance Day ceremony after two years of no large public gatherings and mostly virtual ceremonies. From civilians to those currently serving our country, the lawn in front of the memorial was packed.

Six years after donning the green uniform of the Canadian military, Victoria Robinson came back for her first Remembrance Day in her new uniform to pay tribute to a fallen colleague and to return to the cadets that helped her find her way.

Robinson graduated from the Air Cadet program in 2016. She was a member of the Huntsville Air Cadets, 844 Norseman. Robinson says that it was bittersweet to be back home wearing the new uniform, passing knowledge onto the new generation of cadets, and watching the staff cadets grow throughout the ranks.

"Through cadets, I not only watched the cadets below me grow, learn, and become amazing adults. But I have also seen officers, instructors, and volunteers grow as well."

Robinson added that it is interesting to see that even as adults there is an opportunity to grow as well. Robinson has seen many officers grow in both the organization and in their personal lives. Some celebrate milestones such as their child's graduation to others being promoted within the ranks of cadets.

"It is weird to be proud of an adult growing and doing great but who is at least twice my age."

While Robinson traded elements (leaving one field of training such as air and going into another such as army), she still holds 844 Norseman very close to her heart and was happy that she was finally able to return home for Remembrance Day. While she tries to come home and volunteer with the cadets when possible, there is always something special about being back for Remembrance Day for any former cadet.

Between the feelings of nostalgia and the grief of laying a wreath for a friend and colleague, emotions were running high on Friday.

On April 29th, 2020, six members of the Royal Canadian Armed Forces died during deployment off the coast of Greece in the Ionian Sea. Almost two years after the tragic accident, Robinson was able to lay a wreath in honour of those involved in the crash and to MCpl. Matthew Cousins.

In an article from Global News a statement from Cousins' family said "(he) was loved, is loved, and will never be forgotten." A very true statement as Robinson carries his memory with her often, and his death has been hard for her. Robinson says it meant a lot to her to have this Remembrance Day here with his family. At the time of the crash, Global News published an article in memory of Cousins. In a statement, his family said Cousins. In addition, the article shared that Cousins will



Photo by Danielle McPherson

Cpl. Victoria Robinson and Rick Boddy lay wreaths in honour of the Canadian Armed Forces member who died in the STALKER 22 accident on April 29, 2020. One of the victims of the accident was MCpl. Matthew Cousins, Boddy's son-in-law.

be remembered for his quick-witted sarcasm, a loving family man and great father, and a smile that would light up the room.

It was going to be hard to lay the wreath no matter where she was, but

Robinson felt it was best to do it at home supported by her squadron, family, and Cousins' family.

"It was extremely hard, but it was easier to process everything with the support of everyone around me."

On Friday, Robinson was not only memorializing Cousins, but she was celebrating with loved ones how far they have come in their lives. It was a full circle moment for Robinson to look back at her first night standing vigil,

to help the youngest of cadets prep for their first vigil.

Robinson added, "It's very interesting to go where you had no idea what you were doing to now being able to show all these kids how to do it."

# Educational workers lead protest strike day

By Kennedy Babutac

CUPE educational workers in the Quinte area participated in a protest strike day in front of MPP Todd Smith's office in Rossmore on Nov. 4.

The strike has since ended, and Ontario Premier Doug Ford rescinded the legislation that led to it. Both parties are still at the table discussing the next steps in an agreement. There has not yet been any news toward reaching the deal.

The strike, part of a walkout by educational workers across Ontario, happened because the workers' contract needed to be renewed, and the provincial government didn't agree with what the union was asking for.

CUPE members say the union is committed to improving workers' quality of life in Canada. CUPE advocates for workers who deliver the public services people depend on and members that work in hospitals, schools, municipalities, and many other public spaces.

The strike happened in Rossmore in front of the building where Smith's office is located and in the parking lot from 12-4 p.m. It was a peaceful event.

CUPE members walked safely in circles from the parking lot to the edge of the road. Many people showed up to support those who are a part of the union, including families with their children and those who support these workers.

Krystal Moore, a designated early childhood educator (DECE), said she did not wish to comment on the

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Krystal Moore

possible strike but talked about what educational workers need.

"I'm a designated early childhood educator for the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board for help in the kindergarten classroom. I helped implement the curriculum with my teaching partner," she said.

"I would like extra support, or support in the classroom the whole time with the children we need help with, and smaller classes would be amazing."

Asked what she'd like to see for herself and others, Moore said, "Better pay as well, just for all the hard work and everything that we do all day long for the children in our care in their class. We're learning that would be helpful as well."

Ontario Premier Doug Ford told CBC the government was left with no choice but to pass legislation to prevent a strike.

"I don't want to fight. I want the kids in school. I'm past the stage of fighting; people don't want it," he said. Negotiations with CUPE were rocky from the start. In the summer, both sides disagreed about the timing to begin bargaining.

After months of tense bargaining, the union announced on Oct. 30 that members would go on strike in five days if a deal wasn't reached. The government presented a new offer, but also said that if CUPE didn't cancel strike plans, the legislation would be tabled to impose contracts, according to CTV News Toronto.



Krystal Moore, designated early childhood educator and a CUPE member, at a walkout of educational workers on Nov. 4.

Photo by Kennedy Babutac



Photo by Tuan Minh Nguyen

A woman cries in a moment of silence during the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Belleville Cenotaph Nov. 11. This year's service was attended by approximately 300 people.

# Remembering



Photo by Hunter Middleton

Capt. Adam de Bartok and his son Magnus lay a poppy after the Remembrance Day ceremony held at MacDonald Park beside the Murney Tower National Historic site of Canada in Kingston.



(Right) Local air cadets provide the traditional overnight vigil guard at the Trenton cenotaph on Thursday Nov. 10.  
Photo by Dawna Cook



(Left) Tracy Cross (right), a retired warrant officer from Kanesatake, takes part in the Montreal Remembrance Day ceremony with fellow Mohawk army veterans Eugene Montour (left) and Louis Stacy on Nov. 11.

Photo by Heather Waldron

(Above) Two Korean war veterans lay a wreath at the Quinte West Remembrance Day ceremony at the cenotaph on Nov. 11.

Photo by David LeClair