

# **SPIRIT**

*783 (Calgary) Wing Newsletter*

**ROYAL CANADIAN  
AIR FORCE  
ASSOCIATION**



***Wing Meets the last Tuesday  
of each month at 7pm  
285 Legion Horton Road  
(virtual version also available)***



**MEET THE TEAM**

Chairperson	Rob Caswell
Honorary Chairperson	Col (Retd) Don Matthews
Immediate Past Chairperson	Randy Fisher
First Vice Chairperson	Michelle Gerwing
Second Vice Chairperson	Scott Deederly
Treasurer	Kenn Nixon
Secretary	Cecilia Brugma
Past Chairs Advisory Council	Pat Sulek
Casino Chairperson	Darlene Laroche
Friends of Col Belcher	Pat Sulek
Membership	Anna Lewis
Newsletter	Bev Spielman/Michelle Gerwing
Health and Wellness	Michele Henderson
Sergeant at Arms	Art Hill
Entertainment Chair	Muriel Mymko
Public Relations	Bob Wade
Military Museum Liaison	Bob Wade
Cadet Liaison	Kevin Knight
Advocacy	Scott Deederly
Historian	Grant Whitson
Webmaster/Social Media	Kent Anderson





## *Happy Birthday to you (May Jun)*

Raymond Wetmore	6 May
Terence Holland	7 May
Teri Lang	17 May
Barb Gibson	23 May
Ron Guidinger	23 May
Don Norrie	25 May
Jacilyn Spenard	25 May
Carney Henderson	28 May
Bruce Millar	28 May
Glenys Goossens	31 May
William Cook	8 Jun
Pat Sulek	19 Jun
Ernie Anastasiou	20 Jun
Robert Vanderlee	23 Jun
Kevin Knight	24 Jun
Philip Ricard	26 Jun
Jorden Brugma-Lattery	28 Jun
Craig Henderson	29 Jun
Bev Spielman	29 Jun

# AGM and Charter Dinner Photos



Missing Comrade  
Ceremony



Grant and Al Low from Red  
Deer

The head table with guest  
Jason Arthur from STARS



Wing of the Year!!!



## More Awards



Michele Henderson receiving the  
Award of Distinction



Bryndis Whitson receiving the  
Award of Distinction



Kent Anderson receiving the Award of  
Merit



Bob Lilja receiving the Award of Merit

## ***Message from the Health Care Provider that has your attention.....***

Alberta has launched a new pan Alberta electronic health record. You can have access to more of your health information. Some of the features are:

- Communicate directly with your healthcare team (this does not include family doctors as it is only for AHS)
- View your treatment and appointment schedules at AHS
- Fill out appointment questionnaires ahead of time at your convenience
- Easily join video and/or telephone visits
- View your health information such as: laboratory results, medication list and past visit summaries
- Support family members in their care with proxy access

\*If you already have a MyHealth Records account, you are ready for MyAHS Connect activation. MyAHS Connect will be visible from MyHealth Records once shared by your healthcare team.

If you do not have a MyHealth Records account:

First, you need a MyAlberta Digital ID, then:

1. Create a MyAlberta Digital ID account, visit [myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords](https://myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords)
2. Fill out the requested information. You will need an email address and a valid Alberta Driver's License or Alberta Identification Card
3. You will receive a confirmation email. Click the "Confirm and continue" link in the email within 96 hours to complete the registration process.
4. You now have a basic account and can register for a MyHealth Records account. A confirmation letter with a verification code will be mailed to the address on your id card.
5. You will need to verify your account to keep your access. When your confirmation letter arrives in the mail, follow the instructions in the letter to complete this process.

Information gleaned from:

[Getting Ready for MyAHS Connect \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](https://albertahealthservices.ca)

# Military cemeteries need more funding to keep them from falling into disrepair

By Lee Berthiaume **The Canadian Press**

Posted April 17, 2023 5:38 am

An internal report by Veterans Affairs Canada is raising red flags over the country's military graves and cemeteries, warning that more permanent funding is needed to keep them from falling into disrepair.

The report is the result of an internal audit following up on a similar review six years ago. At that time, nearly 45,000 out of the estimated 207,000 graves of Canada's veterans were in a state of disrepair because of a lack of resources.

The Trudeau government subsequently committed nearly \$25 million over five years in temporary funding starting in 2018, which the new report says has largely addressed the problem by facilitating thousands of repairs.

Yet auditors found that without a permanent increase to the department's funding, that success will be short-lived.

"While five-year funding for the backlog project has allowed the grave marker maintenance team to reduce the backlog of repairs significantly, maintaining an adequate inspection cycle post-project will be challenging," the audit report reads.

"The evaluation finds that the current \$1.25 million allocated to the cemetery and grave marker maintenance program is insufficient to prevent a future maintenance backlog."

The audit report goes on to note that the annual \$1.25 million budget has remained largely unchanged since 2009, even though the number of graves tracked and maintained by the department has increased by more than 40 per cent over the past decade.

Veterans Affairs spokesman Marc Lescoutre confirmed in an email to The Canadian Press that the department has not increased baseline funding for the maintenance program, though he said it has taken \$900,000 from other areas to ensure sufficient funds.

"The department is exploring opportunities to seek ongoing funding to address the increasing cost of maintaining the grave marker inventory and to develop and implement an appropriate grave inspection/maintenance cycle," he added.

The Liberals have been repeatedly criticized for refusing to make permanent investments in Veterans Affairs operations over the past few years, as it has relied instead on temporary funds and staff to address long-standing problems.

That included hiring of hundreds of temporary staff to process a backlog of disability claims from ill and injured veterans, and dozens of temporary case managers to help permanent staff with their overwhelming workloads.

The temporary measures have been criticized by veterans, service providers and others such as auditor general Karen Hogan, who has blasted the continued use of what she calls ad hoc funding.

During their review of grave marking maintenance, auditors interviewed staff from Veterans Affairs as well as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which cares for the graves of 110,000 Canadian soldiers killed and buried overseas in the First and Second World Wars.

Their conclusion: “Returning to the financial status quo after the backlog project will result in a situation where grave markers cannot be inspected and maintained within the current 12-year cycle.

“Further, the 12-year inspection cycle itself was adopted in response to funding levels, not as a best practice. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission currently inspects the graves it is responsible for on a six-year basis.”

In addition to Canadian war graves, the commission also cares for those of British, Australian, New Zealand and Indian soldiers killed during the two great wars.

Auditors found problems in the operation of the two cemeteries that Veterans Affairs owns and operates: Fort Massey Cemetery in Halifax and God’s Acre Cemetery in Esquimalt, B.C., which was recently expanded to accept more graves.

“The upgraded facilities were supposed to allow for on-site staffing to facilitate increasing burials at the cemetery,” the audit report says of God’s Acre. “However, health and safety concerns with the structure have restricted on-site activities.”

Concerns were also raised about a lack of formal policies around who can actually be interred at God’s Acre, how plots are obtained, reserved and priced, while “no business processes are in place for the handling of funeral payments.”

God’s Acre and Fort Massey also did not have up-to-date operational plans or plans for protecting the cultural and historical integrity of either site.

Berthiame, Lee (2023, April 17). *Military cemeteries need more funding to keep them from falling into disrepair*. (1) [Military cemeteries need more funding to keep them from falling into disrepair - National | Globalnews.ca](https://www.globalnews.ca/military-cemeteries-need-more-funding-to-keep-them-from-falling-into-disrepair)



## Your laugh for the day...



"When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra."

- Will Rogers



*(FIRST DAY AS A PILOT...)*

**CONTROL**

**TOWER:** Can you give me your position?

**ME:** I'm next to a cloud that looks like a lion.

**CONTROL**

**TOWER:** Can you be more specific?

**ME:** Simba.

**HERMAN**<sup>®</sup>



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© 1991 Jim Unger

"I'm not stealing it. I'm moving it closer to my house."



# REMINDER

***From your Membership Director:***

*Please contact Anna Lewis, our Director of Membership, if you change any contact info at [bandalewis@shaw.ca](mailto:bandalewis@shaw.ca)*



***From your Health and Wellness Director***

*All Wing members already receive birthday cards. Do you know of anyone in our membership who would appreciate receiving a card of congratulations, or perhaps a card to raise their spirits? Greetings could be sent for many reasons, such as:*

- *a “milestone” birthday*
- *best wishes for someone in hospital or convalescing at home*
- *bereavement on the passing of a Wing member*
- *retirement*
- *graduation*
- *marriage*
- *a special wedding anniversary*
- *receiving recognition and/or winning an award*