

# WWII Medic, Corporal (Ret'd) John Pauls, receives Lifetime Membership to the Royal Canadian Medical Services Association

By Major Joel Bernier, Commanding Officer, 11 Canadian Forces Health Services Centre Shilo

October 2020 was a significant month for 104 year old Cpl (Ret'd) John Pauls, as he had the honor of receiving a Lifetime Membership to the Royal Canadian Medical Services Association (RCMSA).

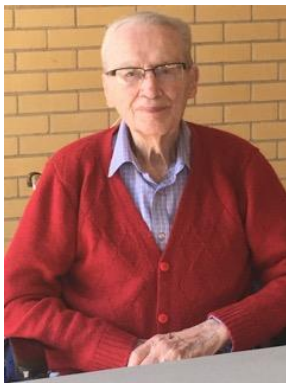


Figure 1 Cpl (Ret'd) John Pauls

The RCMSA is an independent, non-profit, all ranks organization dedicated to promoting Canada's military Medical services – past, present and future, and contributing to the advancement of healthcare in Canada. They accomplish this by increasing public awareness, preserving heritage and fostering Esprit de Corp.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls, served as a Medic with the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC) in Italy and Europe. He was mainly employed in second line medical support, which today would be known as a Role 2 Basic within the Brigade support area. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, France Star, Germany Star, Defence Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp, as well as being mentioned in Despatches. He was promoted to

Corporal while in Italy. He recalls his service in WWII,

*“The medical tents in which we worked were moved frequently as the battle lines changed. Several times while working in these tents, we were even closer to the battle, as the artillery shots were directly overhead. At one time, a barrage lasted for at least two days non-stop. Shrapnel, loud, low flying planes and mortar fire were exploding close by on numerous occasions.”*

The achievement came with a certificate and coin to accompany the honour, and both were presented to his daughter, Marlene Pauls Laucht, on October 2, 2020, near Winnipeg's Saint-Boniface Cathedral War Memorial, by the 11 Canadian Forces Health Services Centre Shilo Command Team. Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls could not attend the presentation in person due to COVID-19 protocols currently in place to protect residents of long term care facilities, where he resides.

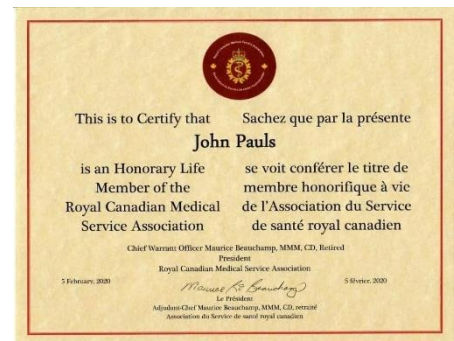


Figure 2 RCMSA Lifetime Membership

The Command Team also took the opportunity to present his daughter with a Quilt of Valour from the Quilt of Valour Canada Society, to give to her father. The Quilt of Valour is Canadian Handmade and is presented to soldiers, past and present in gratitude for their service. This particular quilt was provided by the Canadian Forces Base Shilo Transition centre and it reads, *“Handmade with love, respect and gratitude for your sacrifice to Canada. May the hugs stitched into this quilt give you comfort, strength and love.”*



Figure 3 Presentation of the "Quilt of Valour" L-R Marlene Pauls Laucht, Maj Joël Bernier, Sgt Jeff McGee Command team @ 11 CF H Svcs C Shilo

The presentation respected social distancing, but still gave the Command Team an opportunity to share fond memories with Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls' daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter, and honour his service to Canada.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls was discharged from the RCAMC after the war, following demobilization; however, his medical service to his comrades did not end there. He became a medical orderly



Figure 4 Quilt of Valour

and eventually a supervisor at the Deer Lodge Veterans' Hospital in Winnipeg, where he worked for 30 years, taking care of his fellow brothers and sisters in arms.

Cpl (Ret'd) Pauls has now received his certificate, coin and quilt, which are proudly on display in his room. Marlene Pauls Laucht said,

*“My dad is already using the beautiful quilt and enjoying the extra layer of warmth. He was pleased when I described the presentation, showed him the pictures*

#### References:

<https://www.quiltsofvalour.ca/>

<https://www.royalcdnmedicalsvc.ca/>