

# Quilts of Valour - Canada

Issue 8  
May 2011



## Our Mission

*to ensure that our injured Canadian soldiers are recognized for their bravery and commitment of their true patriotism to our country. We give this support through the presentation of quilts of comfort made for our military service people.*

[www.QuiltsOfValour.ca](http://www.QuiltsOfValour.ca)

## Meet Your Representative.....

This month QoV - Canada is pleased to introduce to you Alison McDonald, our Southwestern Ontario representative.

Alison has been sewing practically all her life, getting her first sewing machine when she was only 6 or 7 years old. All through school she was busy making clothing from everything she could get her hands on, including hand-me-downs from her cousins that she would creatively re-make into something new. She later moved on to knitting, crocheting, embroidery and tatting, then discovered photography in college.

She married her first husband in 1978 and after moving to Kitchener, ON she joined the Canadian Forces as a Reserve officer (CIC). She was involved there with the Air Cadet program working with teenagers on a regular basis. She enjoyed the coaching aspect of that position and has recently become Commanding Officer of a small Air Cadet squadron.



Alison joined her first quilt guild in Waterloo and then added quilting to her already busy life. After her marriage ended in 2002 and having to undergo some radical life changes as a result, she then met Jack, an Anglican priest and retired CF chaplain. They were married 5 years ago. Now living in Hamilton she has joined three quilt guilds and soon after became the QoV Southwestern Ontario contact. All of these aspects of her life keep her quite busy with quilt blessings, shows, guild meetings, service clubs, church groups and promoting awareness for QoV. She says “My life is full and I try to keep energized by all of the activities I engage in”.

They have held three quilt blessing services in St John’s Winona, their church in Hamilton, each bigger than the last. It has been very gratifying to her to see the interest they generate and the willingness people have to do something, anything, for our soldiers.

Alison has three grown children and three grandchildren. Her eldest and only son is a CF member posted in Edmonton, so soldiers and their welfare are very near and dear to her. She first became involved in the QoV program

in the U.S. in 2004 as part of an internet quilt group she belongs to. She loved making the blocks that would be assembled into finished quilts to be given to injured soldiers ... quilting is ALL about care and comfort after all. At this point she has long-arm quilted roughly 200 quilts for QoV, with many more to come.



Three years ago she decided to buy a long-arm machine and run a business from her home. She named her business “Sew What Else” and thoroughly enjoys it.

## Donating or Presenting - How does Quilts of Valour work?

As our society matures, there is clarification needed regarding donations and qualifying for a charitable receipt. As a quilt maker, you are making a quilt of valour for a soldier, not donating a quilt to Quilts of Valour. The quilts you make for soldiers will be presented to a soldier through a military contact at a base or a contact person at a veteran care home, or recovery centre. Quilts of Valour has been incorporated with the mandate - to deliver quilts. You, our quilters across the country, make quilts of valour. Our representatives across the country find destinations for the quilts, and deliver the quilts to those places for you.

Our soldiers are proud to have served our country and truly appreciate being awarded a quilt from someone who wishes to thank them for what they have been doing for our country. Resources and support for recovery are getting better and your quilts are going a long way to provide comfort and warmth. Our veterans who are receiving the quilts are overwhelmed by your generosity. As they age and their minds take them back to the era of the 1940's, they are re-living and remembering some horrific times. Our quilts from a grateful nation go a long way to comfort our soldiers - young and old. You are a very special group of people, and I thank you for your support of our soldiers.

### **Lezley Zwaal**

For more information regarding donations, please visit our website [www.QuiltsOfValour.ca](http://www.QuiltsOfValour.ca)



### **Cold Lake, Alberta**

On Wednesday, April 13, Lezley drove up to Cold Lake AB for a presentation to the quilters on the base and delivery of a few quilts to the MFRC from the Edmonton & District Quilters' Guild. Lisa hosted her stay and the time just flew by. It's amazing how often QoV has connected Lezley with totally unrelated but common facets of life! This time, a connection to Maple Creek, Sask!! On Thursday, they awarded a quilt to John Moreland, retired military working on base with the UN peacekeeping forces. John has stayed in Cold Lake where he was stationed for many years. Now he is an avid biker - citing "cycle therapy" for his stress relief! It was interesting to learn afterwards, the quilt he chose was made by quilter Valerie Welch who used to be a biker!



### **Edmonton & District Quilters' Guild**

The Edmonton guild chose QoV for their recipient of quilts this past year. Over 60 quilts were presented to Mike Hogan of the Integrated Personnel Support Unit at CFB Edmonton. As part of the year's project, quilter Pat Lore prepared a pattern for those who wished to participate in a Mystery Quilt! She has graciously given us the pattern for distribution and can be found on our website through the link [Pattern Ideas](#).



### **A quilt blessing in Southwestern Ontario**

On Sunday, November 14th at St John's Winona, we celebrated with a blessing of Quilts of Valour. This is the third time we have done this. The first time we had 23 quilts, the second time we had 57 quilts, and this time we had 125 quilts. The increase is due in large part to the work done by Alison McDonald, a parishioner who is the contact and spokesperson for QoV - Canada in Southwestern Ontario. Alison speaks to quilt guilds and has a booth or display at several quilt shows, all to make people aware of the work of QoV - Canada. She says she only has to make people aware of the need and what they can do to help, and quilters respond with amazing generosity.

The quilts are made and donated to be given to our wounded soldiers as a concrete gesture of appreciation and gratitude, as well as offering comfort and care for all that the soldiers have done and endured.

On November 14th, the quilts were hung on all available wall space, on the alter rail, on the altars, on the organ and on the keyboard ... the church was ablaze with colour and fabric.

The guest speaker was Capt Joelle Beaudoin (shown right), a Canadian Forces nurse who had served in Afghanistan and is presently posted to the Aeromedical Evacuation unit at CFB Trenton to accompany injured soldiers on their flight back home.



She spoke of the pain and suffering that is a part of the reality of our efforts in Afghanistan to bring justice to people who have been denied such basic rights as access to fresh water, safe roads, education, a voice in the direction of their own villages and country. She also told of the efforts of the Canadian military medical teams to bring healing, not only to our wounded soldiers but also to Afghani soldiers and civilians.

It was a very moving, emotional celebration of the planting of seeds of the kingdom of God and the price people are prepared to pay to see that kingdom grow - even if they wouldn't quite name it that way.

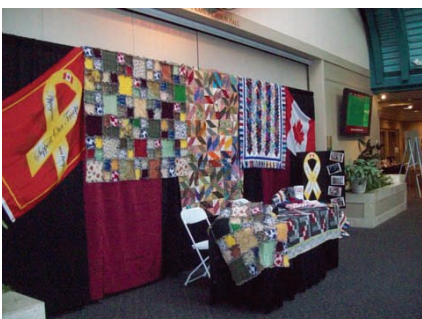
Typical of St John's hospitality, a wonderful reception of good food and lots of conversation followed the service.



### **Vancouver Island, BC - Marilyn Fuller & Judi McCallum**

Our Vancouver Island ladies have been very busy spreading the word about QoV in Victoria and the surrounding areas. They recently had a booth in the Victoria Sewing Show and the West Shore Quilt Show. Brochures, business cards, and copies of our last newsletter were handed out to the many interested people who came by to see them.

In the fall of 2011 they are planning to have a booth at the Luxton Fall Fair as well. The West Shore Guild has had fantastic displays there in the past and last year they were also selling items, along with participation by Native Artists, the Women's Institute and West Shore Arts, so being close to them will surely bring plenty of exposure to QoV.



Marilyn and Judi are also hoping to arrange a pot luck lunch and work day for people to participate in making some quilts in the near future. They have collected 14 quilts so far to deliver to the local base. They would like to thank everyone for their support and all the beautiful quilts they have collected so far. What a wonderful way to say thank-you to our soldiers!



We would like to extend a very BIG thank-you to [Northcott](#) for their generous donation of 200 metres of fabric to QoV representatives across the country . It will be used as backings to assist those in need of some help to complete their projects and is greatly appreciated



**NORTHCOTT**  
*Cottons that feel like silk*

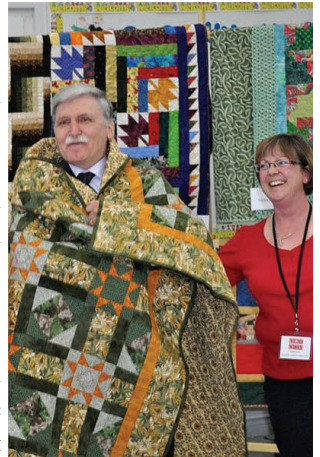


**Eastern Canadian Coordinator - Mary Ewing**

This spring Retired Lieutenant-General and Senator, Roméo Dallaire, received a Quilt of Valour at the 6th QoV - Canada quilting bee held at Orleans United Church. Also in attendance were 66 registered QoV quilters.

“(The quilt) is like a tool, a cover of security,” said Senator Dallaire. “It allows injured soldiers and their families to feel good, to feel secure once again. When you’re injured, as so many of us are in different ways, you seek out a certain warmth and feeling of serenity, and this quilt instantly provides that.”

Since retiring from the military, Senator Dallaire has spoken out on the subject of PTSD and written several articles and publications on the topic. He greatly appreciates the work and commitment the many quilters give in their donations of quilts to soldiers to help comfort them when they are not feeling 100%.



You can see the entire article on Senator Dallaire receiving his quilt [here](#).



**Please check the following list for a contact person in your province:**

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\*\* We ask that you please put QoV or Quilts of Valour in the subject line of any emails.