

Fire Fighters Honour Their Own, Lest We Forget

By MWO William Elliott

On 19 March 2015, 30 members of the Edmonton Garrison Fire Service celebrated the life of the late Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent with the dedication of a Fire Fighter bunker gear stall in his honor. In attendance were LCol Rizzato, Engineering Services Unit Commanding Officer and the ESU RSM, CWO Trottier, along with 40 plus serving and retired Fire Fighters and Engineers, with one serving Fire Fighter coming from Victoria, BC at his own expense.

WO Ryan Vincent (no relation), the dedication organizer and former co-worker of Patrice's, said, "to be able to march my fellow Fire Fighters into the Fire Hall and tell Pat's story to everyone was an honour I will always remember." WO Vincent spoke of the qualities that set Patrice apart from his peers: his dedication and loyalty to the CAF and the Fire Service and how he was always the first one to step forward when someone needed a hand. Padre Van Smeerdyk was on hand to bless the bunker stall and say a prayer just before the "Last Post" was played by Sgt Dave Morgan of the RCA band.

The Edmonton Garrison Fire Hall was the last fire hall that WO Patrice Vincent served in while employed as a Fire Fighter before health issues required an out of trade posting to Saint Jean sur Richelieu. On 20 October 2014, he was tragically killed, one of two soldiers attacked with a motor vehicle, the other soldier surviving his injuries.

Edmonton Garrison Fire Service personnel were quick to react to the news of Pat's death, many having served with him. Arrangements were quickly made to send members to his funeral and to present a Fire Fighter helmet to his family. A helmet bearing his name and number was reproduced for presentation and only then was his actual personal helmet discovered in a trophy case, his name still written under the brim.



Lt Jean-Guy Mayer, the Edmonton Garrison Fire Chief, and WO Ryan Vincent during the dedication of a Fire Fighter bunker gear stall to honour the late WO Patrice Vincent

The reproduced helmet now sits proudly in the dedicated bunker gear stall, complete with brass plate bearing his name, bunker gear and photograph. Pat's breathing apparatus mask also bearing his name was found and added, an item that he personally used, besides the bunker gear stall itself.

The Edmonton Garrison Fire Services would like to thank those that supported this event, specifically, the Edmonton chapter of the Canadian Military Engineers Association, the Edmonton Sappers Club and Garrison Imaging, as well as FireHouse651.com for helping to spread the word of this event.