



Warrant Officer Gerry Webster, grew up as a PMQ Brat on east coast Air Force Bases in the late 50's, 60's and early 70's. The son of a RCAF firefighter, a career choice in the Forces as a Firefighter (651) was an easy sell and Gerry enrolled in the CAF as a direct entry, 04 Sep 1974, completed recruit training at Canadian Forces Recruit School (CFRS) Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, before proceeding on QL3 Fire Fighter Training at Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Ordnance and Engineering/ Fire Fighter Training Company (CFSAOE/FFTC) in CFB Borden Ontario, from 5 January to 3 May of 1975.

His career as a rookie firefighter began in the Annapolis Valley at CFB Greenwood, on 5 May 1975. Having lived in Greenwood previously for 5 years, the learning curve was not as steep as some of his peers experienced.

Following a short 4 month engagement to his Sweetheart, he and Deane married in January of 1976. They had met 4 years earlier living in the same neighborhood in Greenwood as PMQ Brats. Their daughter Kristine was born in Berwick, two and a half years later in August 1978.

Gerry was promoted to Corporal in October 1978 following completion of his QL5 and was finally able to afford that "first new car".

After 5 years in Greenwood it was time to move on; Posting to CFSAOE/FFTC as an Instructor on 25 August 1980, looked appeared more appealing than a tour on a HMCS Destroyer, (Nipigon) so it was an easy decision and a done deal.

In December of 1981, after 17 months at "The School" the pastures appeared to be greener on the Civie side of the fence. An ever-so-slight nod of approval from Deane and a promise from him of a (no more moves) Civie Job happened, but his release from the CAF was to be shortlived.

The downward spiraling job markets, high inflation and interest rates of over eighteen percent in 1982, were difficult economic times, jobs came and disappeared quickly. Re-enrollment into the CAF looked very attractive and so the jump back to military life occurred in March 1982 with a return to CFSAOE/FFTC as part of the "Recruiter's" bargain.

Promoted to MCpl in March of 1983 and subsequently employed as Assistant Course Director for the QL 3 Training Cell, "Life Was Good". After another highly rewarding 15 months of Instructing, the time arrived for another career adjustment and subsequent family move.

Posted to CFB Summerside, into a Deputy Platoon Chief position, in July of 1984. After only three months in the Deputy Platoon Chief's job, an unexpected Sergeant vacancy occurred and MCpl Webster moved up into the Platoon Chiefs job. Promotion to Sergeant came in December of 1988. PEI was not to remain home for much longer as vacancies in CFB Goose Bay were many and employment as the Chief Fire Inspector was looming on the horizon, becoming a reality on 5 July 1989.

A terrific work and cultural experience, despite difficult surroundings for families, working with Public Works Group Canada, DND FR Civilian Fire Fighters and our NATO Partner Countries, USA, Great Britain, Netherlands and Germany, CFB Goose Bay was definitely a rewarding learning curve and promotion to Warrant Officer quickly followed in July 1992.

As often occurs with promotion, came a posting to 8 Wing Trenton, Ontario. There, aside from being employed as a Platoon Chief, the opportunity to attend courses like Senior Leadership in CFB Borden, Fire and Arson Investigation at Acadia University in Nova Scotia; and Hazardous Materials Courses at Lampton College in Sarnia, Ontario, presented themselves and were eagerly accepted.

Four years at 8 Wing Trenton seemed to fly by and before long, the Career Manager was saying it was time to move on again...

Returning to 5 Wing Goose Bay in July of 1996, Warrant Officer Webster once again worked with DND Civilian FR Fire fighters as well as our NATO Partner countries in a very busy "Fighter" environment.

But, two short years later, the decision by the Canadian Government to have Goose Bay operated by Alternative Services Delivery (ASD) contractors, found hundreds of CAF personnel transferred in July of 1998 from 5 Wing Goose Bay to all points West...East and South... WO Webster was to be included.

A long eighteen year wait for the return to the "Career Start Point" resulted and a posting message back to 14 Wing Greenwood.

Having replanted "Roots" home was seriously being considered as Annapolis Valley. Y2K worries became a time of reflecting on a 25 year career and when an opportunity to fill a vacant Air Reserve position came about in the winter of 1999/2000, Warrant Officer Webster accepted a relinquishment in rank to Sergeant and found a second career as an Air Reserve Firefighter in May of 2000. A position held until the present. Having completed 42 plus years as a firefighter in September 2016 will be retiring from CAF 19 June 2017.

Gerry and Deane have not decided whether they will remain in Greenwood as their "forever home" as their daughter and family have planted roots in Alberta. So one more move may happen in the foreseeable future.

A DWD for Warrant Officer Webster will be held on the 7th of June 2017. Anyone who wishes to send a farewell message or share a story can send it to Wood WO GR@WLEO CE@Greenwood <mailto:Gerald.Wood@forces.gc.ca>