

Warrant Officer Ernie Nadjiwan

Royal Canadian Air Force

Family Life:

Ernie was born in Parry Sound, Ontario, in June of 1931, to Frank and Ethel Nadjiwan. He was one of five children including Vera, Dorothy, Clifford and Nanette.

Ernie lived on Parry Island until 1936, moving to Cape Croker, where the family farmed. Since his father and brother both enlisted during the Second World War, the family moved to Toronto where his mother worked as a riveter at an aircraft factory.

Ernie attended Cape Coker Elementary School and then St. Jerome's High School in Kitchener for three years before completing grade 12, at the Spanish Residential School. He and his wife, whom Ernie met in high school, were married for over 60 years.

After Ernie retired he settled at Cape Croker in 1986 and remained there until his death. He served on Council for one term and did much traveling. Desiring a quieter life at home, Ernie chose not to run for a second term on Council.

Military Service:

WO Nadjiwan enlisted for military service in 1951 and achieved the rank of Warrant Officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force by the end of his 35 year career in 1986.



Military Service:

During his decades of service WO Nadjiwan was an Air Force Mechanic and shop supervisor who ran his own Parahanger. He spent the last five years of his service in Ottawa.

WO Nadjiwan was a Cold War Warrior who participated in the United Nations Yemen Observation Mission from 1963 to 1964. He remarked that the living conditions in the Middle East were “terrible and unsanitary at the time and women were treated terribly.”

Recalling his two tours with the UN in Egypt and Yemen, WO Nadjiwan remembers having to help to fix a disabled aircraft in the desert. He had to stay overnight close to where the war was being fought. The Chinese had constructed a road through the desert to the Yemen Sea to transport mined minerals out of the country and the Yemeni people did not like that! A pilot was sent to safely retrieve the repaired plane and WO Nadjiwan.

During the FLQ Crisis in October of 1970, WO Nadjiwan was put on high alert and helped ferry troops to Montreal. He said they were given a whistle and if they saw something suspicious, they were just to blow it! As far as he could tell, it was to scare the suspected perpetrators!



Decorations:

UN Emergency Force Middle East (UNEFME)

Lessons Learned:

Ernie reflected on his two tours to the Middle East during the 1960s and 1970s: “It was quite an experience being over there and I would do it again. Oh yes I would!”