

Sergeant Leonard Smith

Royal Canadian Army Service Corps

Family Life:

Joseph Leonard Smith was born to Frank and Chantal Marie (nee Lablac) on May 17, 1932, at Meteghan, Nova Scotia. He attended both Digby Elementary and High Schools.

In 1963, Leonard married Delia Frotten and they had one child together, Joanne. He was also stepfather to Victor, Teresa and Fred.

Leonard worked at a few jobs throughout his life including digging clams, being a motor cycle mechanic and a paramedic. His military training helped him become a paramedic and he retired in Meaford, Ontario, in 1991, where he had worked for many years.

Service History:

As Sergeant Smith put it, “he was looking for a job” and heard the Canadian Armed Forces were looking for recruits to go to



Decorations:

- Canadian Korea Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal for Korea
- United Nations Service Medal (Korea)

Service History continued:

Korea, so he enlisted for service in 1952, in Digby, Nova Scotia. His other brothers had served in the military including his brother Fred who was also sent to Korea. Sergeant Smith completed his basic training at Base Borden and subsequently moved on to Shilo, Manitoba, to train to parachute with other troops as part of the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps into combat zones. He was in Korea for two years providing rations, ammunition and care for the frontline troops.

In 1954, Sergeant Smith returned to Canada, where he taught basic military skills to cadets, designed uniforms for the CAF and provided medical care at outposts such as Churchill, Manitoba, using snowmobiles to transport ailing patients to hospital. After nine years of service, he was discharged in 1961.

Interesting Stories:

Leonard recalled an image from Korea that has stayed with him to this day: “Marching up to the frontlines we went through a village that had come under recent attack. We came across a lifeless young boy who was leaning against a tree. It was a shame young kids had to suffer.”

Lessons Learned:

Growing up in a small village in Canada, I had never been shot at until I entered a war zone in Korea. I learned to be a man accepting my responsibility of being a soldier.