

Col Murray C. Johnston, MSM, CD

Colonel Johnston was born in 1933 and served for 31 years as a Canadian Armed Forces officer from 1952 to 1983. From 1983 to 1991, he was the Director of the National Emergency Agency for Energy in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, as well as the Canadian Representative to the NATO Petroleum Planning Committee. Appointed Colonel Commandant of the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Branch in 1991, he held the position for 13 years until 15 May 2004.

A graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada and of the Canadian Army Staff College, he is a Registered Professional Engineer and holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of British Columbia and a master's degree in automotive engineering from the University of Michigan.

His postings have included:

- National Defence Headquarters as Director Support Vehicles Engineering and Maintenance, Director of Program Plans and Team Leader in the DEVIL Maintenance System Working Group,
- 202 Workshop Depot as Commanding Officer,
- The International Commission for Control and Supervision (Vietnam 1973) as a Region Commander in the Mekong Delta,
- Headquarters Mobile Command as Senior Staff Officer Maintenance; Ottawa Militia District as GSO1,
- 4 Field Workshop (RCEME) in Germany as Recovery Platoon Officer and 2IC,
- The Land Engineering Test Establishment as a test engineer on the Bobcat and M113A1 Armoured Personnel Carriers,
- 2nd Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, Light Aid Detachment as Commanding Officer, and
- 213 Workshop (RCEME) in Winnipeg as Control Officer.

He is a past-president of the Royal Military Colleges Club of Canada, the Friends of the Canadian War Museum, the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Association, the RCEME Association, and is a former vice-chairman of the Conference of Defence Associations. From 1997 to 2008 he was a director of the Perley and Rideau Veterans Health Centre in Ottawa. Currently he is a member of Branch 616 of the Royal Canadian Legion and has been a volunteer guide at the Canadian War Museum.

He has been the EME Branch Historian since 1994 and remains the RCEME Corps Historian Emeritus today. He wrote the two Corps histories: *Canada's Craftsmen*, and *Canada's Craftsmen at 50!* While Colonel Commandant, he created the RCEME Book of Remembrance, and arranged that the gravesite of every RCEME soldier who has died in the line of duty was visited and photographed.

In 2002, on the recommendation of the Royal Canadian Legion, Colonel Johnston was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for his work on behalf of veterans and remembrance. In 2003, at the request of the EME soldiers in Bosnia, he was awarded a NATO SFOR medal in recognition of his 10 trips to the Balkans including Croatia, Kosovo, and Bosnia to visit them.

On 25 October 2004, the Governor-General awarded him the Meritorious Service Medal in the military division:

“Col Johnston (retired) has served with tireless dedication and selflessness as Colonel Commandant of the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Branch of the Canadian Forces since 1991. He has researched and written two authoritative books on the history of the Branch and developed the Branch’s Honour Roll. His visits across Canada and to soldiers deployed throughout the world, along with his participation in countless charitable and volunteer military support organizations, have been instrumental in bridging the gap between the sacrifices made by Canadian Forces veterans and today’s serving soldiers.”

In 2005, at the age of 72, he completed, for the fifth time, the four-day 160-kilometer Nijmegen Marches as part of the Canadian Military Contingent.

He and his wife, Joan, live in Ottawa. They have two married daughters and four grandchildren.