

Senior's Wisdom

Eloi J. Richard



By: Darlene Lawson

Eloi Richard was born in St. Charles, Kent Co., on March 6th, 1929. When he was a small boy, his father accepted a job from Alex Miller in Molus River and moved the family to the English community to live for two years. "It is where I learned to speak English, even though it was hard in those times", Eloi comments. In 1944 his father was working at the O'Leary Saw Mill. Eloi decided to join him and moved to Richibucto. "Our wages were 35 cents an hour and we worked ten hour days. After that I just roamed around for awhile wondering what to do with my life. On August 16th, 1950, I joined the Canadian Forces. I soon found myself on a special task force heading to Korea."

Eloi was sent to Petawawa, Ontario in the French Regiment RCR and transferred back to Val Cartier, Quebec with the Royal 22nd Regiment. He continued his basic training in Quebec until he was transferred to Fort Louis, Washington for advanced training before leaving for Korea. On April 18th, 1951, he boarded a ship for Korea, arriving on May 4th. A week later he was moving toward the front lines. On the 22nd of June, 1951 he was injured with shrapnel in his right leg and was transferred to a Field Hospital in Japan. After eight days, he was moved to a British Hospital at Camp Hero, Japan. Upon recovery, he was sent on special training in Japan. He returned to Korea in October 1951. For the next four months, he was on the battlefields in defensive position.

A special task force was needed for paratroopers, and Eloi was sent to replenish the airborne battalion. He qualified for the paratroopers in Rivers, Manitoba after five jumps. "It sounds crazy to jump out of a very good airplane, but that is what I did. I didn't think too much of it, but it was a job. One day the wind changed and I landed on top of a barn. I was in the airborne battalion for four years. I was in Germany from 1953 - 1955. After returning from Germany, I lived in Gagetown. I moved back to Richibucto in April 1957 when I was released from the Canadian Forces. When I was in Germany, I traveled to England, Holland, France, and Belgium. It was a way to see the world."

In 1956, when Eloi was on leave from Gagetown, he stopped in to Tony Mazerolle's Restaurant in Richibucto and met a young

girl by the name of Eveline Guimond. On May 14th, 2007, Eloi and Eveline celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They have five children, seven grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

After his release from the Canadian Forces, Eloi worked as a mechanic in Theo Vautour's Esso garage and later moved to the Texaco Garage in Richibucto. After years of working as a mechanic, he went to work at an upholstery shop in St. Louis. When the shop closed, he was fortunate to become employed by Kouchibouguac National Park, where he worked as a Security Guard and later became Warden of the Park. He retired in 1988.

For the past several years Eloi has had serious health problems, including open heart surgery. "My life is good and I am lucky to enjoy my life. I have my family and I have good friends, that is what I value most. I never regretted my years of serving in the Canadian Forces. It is because of the Forces and people who served that we still have peace today."



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Eloi & Eveline Richard

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