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## Local News

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# True patriot love with every stitch

By Emma Taylor Kingston This Week  
Posted 22 hours ago

Flags sewn by a local seamstress are flown proudly from the backs of motorcycles and have even accompanied soldiers overseas as they serve tours in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan.

Laurrie Liddle, owner of Laurrie's Alterations located at 506 Days Rd., has been sewing flags for the Canadian Army Veterans Motorcycle Units (CAV) for six years. The flags are for all intents and purposes the unit colours, which often represent battle honours.

Liddle went into business for herself eight years ago, after the sewing company she worked for closed.

"I had been visiting my parents in Nova Scotia and when I returned the business had closed and I had no job, no nothing," she explains.

With young children to support, she decided she would try doing things on her own instead of going on assistance. She started out in a 10x12 foot room with her sewing machine, steadily building a customer base.

Today, business is good. The majority of work she does are alterations, but she also does dress making, zipper changes and tailoring. Interacting with her customers is her favourite part of her job.

Six years ago she was approached by the CAV and asked if she could make flag for them.

"It started out with one flag and then they brought me more and more to do, and now I make all the flags for them," she says.

Liddle's decision to help out was based on the fact that her father was in the military, and she has a lot of respect for the military.

The fabrics and the silkscreened logo are supplied and she cuts out and assembles the flags and sews on the name bars.

Bill Truman, a.k.a. Drifter, who was born and raised in Kingston, joined the CAV five years ago. The retired Warrant Officer who served with the Royal Canadian Regiment is the 1st CAV Formation President and oversees 28 units in Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

Each flag is olive green and bears the 1st CAV logo which depicts an old motorcycle dispatch rider from the Second World War.

"There was a training area over in England, and to get their qualifications, dispatch riders learning how to ride motorcycles had to go into what was known as the Devil's Soup Bowl — a big hole in the ground that they had to be

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Laurrie Liddle, owner of Laurrie's Alterations, sews a flag for the Canadian Army Veterans Motorcycle Units (CAV).

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able to get out of on their motorcycles. The logo is taken from an actual picture of a rider flying over the edge of that hole," says Truman.

The flag represents each unit or formation and are named after a Canadian battle honour from the First World War up to the present. The Kingston unit is named Vimy. There are 50 different CAV units across Canada —the latest unit is called Gulf Kuwait.

Some of the flags have accompanied members who are actively serving in the military in Iraq and Afghanistan, and American CAV members have taken them around the world.

"Some of the flags have come back with shrapnel holes, burns and even blood on them," says Truman. "Lots of them, especially the infantry guys, are right out front where the action is."

When members return, ribbons are hung off the flags to represent what country they have served in. These flags, flown off the back of motorcycles when members go to group events, go a long way to increasing public understanding.

"People want to know about the flags and we are very proud to turn around and tell them about it," says Truman.

Many people associate bikers with something negative and the 1st CAV doesn't want the public to have the impression that they are a biker gang. The group tries to do as much as they can for the community and has helped out various charities by holding rides to raise funds to support people with Muscular Dystrophy, the Tony Stacey Centre for Veterans Care, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and even raising money to help an autistic boy get a service dog.

"Our philosophy is to ride, have fun and help others," explains Truman.

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