



VETERANS' HOUSE
A Multifaith Housing Initiative Project

Canso Investment Counsel & Carswell Family issue lead gift to Veterans' House

NOV. 8, 2018 – OTTAWA | A sizeable building block toward the creation of a new community for homeless veterans in the Ottawa area was announced today by Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI).

Canso Investment Counsel and its president and founder, John Carswell and his family, have made a lead gift to MHI to support Veterans' House, a building to be constructed for homeless veterans on the site of the former airforce base, CFB Rockcliffe. MHI, which will own and manage the new community, also indicated the property and building will be named Canso Campus and the Andy Carswell Building, respectively.

MHI is a coalition of faith communities coordinating their efforts to provide and promote safe, affordable housing for lower-income households in Ottawa.

"Multifaith Housing would like to thank John Carswell, his family and Canso Investment Counsel for their generosity and the invaluable support they have provided to our Veterans' House fundraising campaign," stated Suzanne Le, the organization's Executive Director. "They bring us another step closer to breaking ground."

When complete, Veterans' House will provide a community of 40 units for homeless veterans and veterans at risk of becoming homeless. Following a Housing First model, it will include social support to help those with health needs.

The donation stems from the military service of the Carswell family, notably that of John's father, Squadron Leader Andrew (Andy) Carswell, AFC, CD. Andy served in the Second World War as a RCAF pilot. His Lancaster bomber aircraft was shot down over Germany in 1943. He was a POW for two years, escaping twice. In 1949, he rejoined the RCAF and was stationed in Ottawa at RCAF Station Rockcliffe, flying the Canso aircraft on northern mapping operations. Andy was awarded the Air Force Cross by Queen Elizabeth for his Search and Rescue work in British Columbia. Sergeant Morrison Carswell MM, Andy's father, served during the First World War from 1914-18, earning the Military Medal. John Carswell was a RCAF air navigator, and his son, Colin, is currently serving as a Canadian Army infantry officer.

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“I can think of no better way to honour my dad’s service than to make this gift,” said John Carswell. “We are disheartened there is a need for Veterans’ House, and that Canada’s military veterans make up such an inordinate amount of the country’s overall homeless population. This type of facility – a community embedded with medical and social supports – is a huge step in the right direction and a meaningful way to give back to Canada’s veterans. My dad says, ‘I don’t mind having my name on something like that’.”

The Veterans’ House project is supported by several partners, including Ottawa Salus, CAHDCO, Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command and District G, Soldiers Helping Soldiers, True Patriot Love, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, Helmets to Hardhats and Support our Troops.

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