

## **ROSS MUNRO AWARD**

**VIMY AWARD DINNER  
MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION  
GATINEAU, QUEBEC  
21 NOVEMBER 2003**

**PRESENTATION COMMENTS  
BY  
CHAIRMAN CDA  
LGEN (RET) R.J. EVRAIRE**

“It was the worst night of the blitz, Germany’s bombing offensive against London through the winter of 1940-41. Newcomer Foster Barclay had been in town only a few hours that December 29th, 1940, and he could hardly believe what he saw. On Fleet Street, the Canadian Press office where he had come to work was bombed out by a direct hit. Up Ludgate Hill, St. Paul’s Cathedral stood with magnificent defiance amid walls of fire nurtured by tens of thousands of incendiary bombs. Beyond it, The City, the financial heart of the British world, lay in ruins.

Barclay made his way through the streets with other Canadian Press war correspondents. He finally couldn’t resist asking a simple question: “Is it always like this?”

It wasn’t, but Canada’s war correspondents did have numerous comparable moments before the war was over.

They were a varied and colorful crew: the brilliant L.S.B. Shapiro, later a best-selling novelist, who would arise from his typewriter and proclaim, “I have just written a magnificent story”; the trenchant, red-headed Ralph Allen who agonized over every word he wrote - and wrote so well they all liked to read him; the beloved raconteur, Greg Clark; the buoyant Charles Lynch; the dramatic Matthew Halton whose throbbing CBC broadcasts brought the war into thousands of Canadian living rooms. There were dozens of them and, in their army uniforms, they followed Canada’s soldiers everywhere they went.

The best-known and most respected of them all was a lean, gangling, quiet, serious reporter named Ross Munro. Wes Gallagher, an American war correspondent who later became general manager of The Associated Press, said: “Munro was not only the top Canadian correspondent of the war. He combined great personal courage with extremely lucid writing and reporting”.

Ce texte, Mesdames et Messieurs, est pris du livre “Canadians At War – 1939-1945 », publié à Montréal en 1969 par l’Association canadienne de Reader’s Digest, texte qui illustre clairement la raison pour laquelle la Conférence des associations de la défense, avec le concours du Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, soucieux de mettre de l’avant les questions de sécurité et de défense ainsi que celle qui sont reliés à l’efficacité et au bien-être des Forces armées canadiennes, a choisi de créer et nommer un prix Média en l’honneur de Ross Munro.

[This brief text, taken from “The Canadians At War – 1939-1945”, published in Montreal by the Reader’s Digest Association of Canada in 1969, very clearly illustrates why tonight, the Conference of Defence Associations, in cooperation with the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, and in partial fulfillment of a shared mission to stimulate informed public discussion and debate on Canadian defence and security and to promote the efficiency and well-being of Canada’s Armed Forces, continue to honour Ross Munro with the creation of this special media award.]

C’est avec grand plaisir que je préside cette deuxième présentation du Prix Média Ross Munro, une présentation qui sera faite annuellement lors du dîner Vimy parrainé par l’Institut de la Conférence des associations de la défense.

[It is my very great pleasure to preside over this second presentation of the Ross Munro Media Award, a presentation that will continue to be a special feature of the CDA Institute’s Annual Vimy Dinner.]

[Le Prix Média Ross Munro a pour but de reconnaître, annuellement, un ou une journaliste canadien/canadienne qui a contribué de façon exceptionnelle à faire connaître les enjeux touchant la défense et la sécurité du Canada auprès du grand public. Le comité de sélection, choisi parmi les membres de l’exécutif de la CAD et du milieu journalistique, se penche sur ce qu’ont produit les candidats sous forme de documents préparés pour la presse écrite ou électronique et destinés au grand public. Recherche et analyse sont certains des éléments clefs figurant au tableau d’évaluation du matériel soumis. La personne déclarée gagnante du Prix Média Ross Munro aura contribué des documents dont la qualité professionnelle et l’impact sur le public ne font aucun doute.]

The Ross Munro Media Award recognizes a Canadian journalist who has made a significant and outstanding contribution to the understanding, by the general public, of Canada’s defence and security issues. The Award selection committee, chosen from members of the CDA Executive and from the journalism profession, considers what material nominees have produced (in print, or electronic format - radio or television) for public consumption. Depth of research and analysis are essential elements of the evaluation of the material. The winner’s contribution will have received wide acclaim and be considered significant journalism.

Our 2003 winner of the Ross Munro Media Award is a native of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, a former photographer, writer and newspaper editor who is now an Alberta-based documentary filmmaker, director and cinematographer working in partnership with various production companies. Over the years, he has produced some outstanding work on the activities of the Canadian military. He has reported on Canadian defence issues from such places as Somalia, Croatia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, and his work clearly shows how he has earned the respect of the members of the Canadian Forces. In 2002, in Afghanistan during Operation APPOLO, our winner gained special access to 3PPCLI Battle Group for a period of three months, recording never-before-seen events and accumulating stunning first-hand accounts and images of the war on terrorism. The result was an emotion-laden series comprised of Chasing Shadows, Waging Peace, and the very powerful and moving Friendly Fire and offers an exclusive look inside Canada’s military and the harsh impact of war. Chasing Shadows and Friendly Fire first aired on

History Television on Remembrance Day last year. Waging Peace aired with the other two in its debut on History Television in January 2003.

A symbolic testimony of the respect and admiration that the Canadian Military Engineers have for this year's winner of the Ross Munro Media Award is his formal induction into the "Order of the Pukka Sapper" by 1 Combat Engineer Regiment in June 2003, in Edmonton. The ceremony made him an "Honourary Sapper" - a gesture of utmost respect and rare honour.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mesdames et Messieurs, je vous demande d'accueillir le lauréat du prix-média Ross Munro pour l'année 2003, please join me in welcoming this year's Ross Munro Media Award winner, Mr. Garth Pritchard.

J'ai l'honneur de demander à M. David Pratt de faire la présentation. I am delighted to call on Mr. David Pratt, Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, and well known to everyone in the audience, to make the presentation to Mr. Pritchard.

Thank you, Garth

May I now introduce Brigadier General (Ret) Don Macnamara, the President of the CDA Institute and our host for this evening's festivities.