

October 22, 2021

Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Ryan D. Smid, MMM, MB, CD
Robert Land Academy
6727 S Chippawa Rd,
Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0

Dear Colonel Smid:

On behalf of the Alumni, I would like to express our sincerest gratitude for the hospitality extended to us during the fall exercise. Being reunited with our old school chums and experiencing the fall exercise again, was a powerful and moving experience that none of us will forget and all will cherish. Please extend to the staff and boys our heart felt gratitude for all they did to make us feel so welcome.

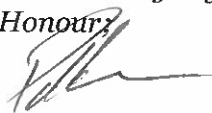
During our stay we all had the pleasure of interacting with the boys, swapping war stories, and getting to know one another. While many of us came back prepared to preach the "It was a lot harder here when I was a kid!" routine, we were quickly enlightened to the ways of 21st century Robert Land Academy. Thoughtful in conversation, respectful at all times, articulate, ambitious and very self aware, pound for pound the boys are so much farther ahead than we ever were. It was quite evident to us that the school's mission of churning out fine young men is still going strong. So while it is not the same school of 20, 30 or even 40 years ago we all concluded one thing, like us, the academy has gotten much better with age!

The changes we witnessed of course did not happen by accident but were rather the result of solid leadership and a supporting cadre of staff whose commitments to the boy's success was quite evident. And what is with the smiles? Back in the day as young NCOs the Sergeant Major would impress upon us that leaders must be fair, firm and friendly and yet he always scowled when the word friendly came out. Your staff seem to smile a whole lot more and as for friendly, we could not have asked for better hosts.

I would be remised if we did not give a shout out to one of our own, Chef Ness and his wonderful staff. The chow and smiling service was excellent and I am not sure if the boys know how good they have it.

In closing, thank you once again for welcoming us back to a place many of us called home. It is truly gratifying to see the dream that is Robert Land Academy alive and well, and meeting the challenges presented by an even more diverse group of young men.

Yours in Loyalty, Labour, Courage, Commitment and Honour,



The Alumni