



**STAG & DOE**  
for  
**JULIE LOUNDS & DAN COTTER**  
Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>  
at the  
**ACTON LEGION**  
8 pm - 1 am  
\$10.00 each  
Tickets available at the door

**LOOK WHO'S**

CELEBRATING HIS **75<sup>TH</sup>** BIRTHDAY

**DR. LOU DARCIE**

of Rockwood

Friends are invited to an

**Open House Celebration**

at

**Rockwood United Church**

119 Harris St., Rockwood

2-4 p.m.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 14**

Refreshments will be served

Best Wishes Only Please!



Former Acton resident Master Corporal Brian McCallum was one of the soldiers injured in a devastating roadside bombing explosion in Afghanistan Easter Sunday. Six soldiers died in the bombing. *Submitted photo*

# Former Acton resident survives blast that kills six fellow Canadian soldiers

Continued from pg. 1

"When the blast went inside the vehicle he was blown out just like (as if it was) a cannon."

Brian was tossed into the air, landing back on top of the vehicle, injuring his back and neck, he said.

At the scene, after determining nothing could be done for the six men who had died, Bob said Brian and another soldier rushed to the aid of a severely injured soldier— Cpl. Shaun Fevens— who ended up under the badly damaged vehicle. The other surviving soldier worked to ensure the area was secured.

Brian and the other soldier managed to pull Fevens out, and tended to his injuries, at times taking direction from the wounded man himself who had taken an advanced course in first aid.

"His (Brian's) military training just kicked right in," said Bob.

The bomb blew everything off the outside of the vehicle, including Brian's kit.

"His guns were gone. His pistols were gone, his tags were gone. They couldn't even find the wheels. One of their rifles was found 150 metres away," said Bob.

Ironically, he said, the only thing left in his son's backpack when it was finally found was a metal cross his stepmother Norah, who raised him since he was a young boy, had recently given him.

The injured soldiers were treated at a mobile field hospital nearby, then airlifted to Kandahar Hospital. Fevens was later flown to a U.S. military hospital in Germany.

The six who were killed in the

incident are Cpl. Brent Poland, Pte. David Greenslade, Pte. Kevin Kennedy, Sgt. Donald Lucas, Cpl. Chris Stannis, and Cpl. Aaron Williams.

Bob said his son dismisses his injuries as trivial, compared to the loss of the six soldiers and the severe injuries suffered by Fevens.

There were 10 soldiers on board the vehicle, all members of Hotel company. The six who died and Fevens were in the back when the blast occurred west of Kandahar City in the Maywand area near the Halmand province border.

The soldiers who survived were just sufficiently removed from the centre of the monstrous explosion as the LAV's wheels passed over the device, believed to have had an enormous charge, because it doesn't succumb easily and there's little left of the vehicle to tow back across the desert.

Brian's mother, Jeanette Collier of Acton, found out late Sunday night that her son had been injured, but at that time didn't know to what extent. Media reports said one of the surviving soldiers had been severely injured and Collier feared that it was her son.

It wasn't until after a worry-filled 24 hours she learned he had not been seriously injured.

Collier said the soldiers who lost their lives in the tragedy— the largest single death toll suffered by Canadian troops in Afghanistan— were all close friends who had trained together at CFB Galetown, N.B.

"Certainly my heart goes out to

those other parents," said Collier.

Bob stressed the soldiers are all "good buddies."

"They loved each other," he said.

Brian has been on several tours of duty on peacekeeping missions in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Haiti, and Aretria since joining the military at 17.

But it was his current mission to Afghanistan that's bothered his grandmother, Jane McCallum of Acton, the most.

She said she's been on edge since her grandson went there at the end of January.

"It's been terrible," she said. "I never got used to Afghanistan because I knew he was right in the battle area."

Her anxiety went into overdrive Sunday when she heard the news reports about the bomb and deaths of the soldiers.

"I knew what mission Brian was on and what it's called. Then you watch and watch, and worry, and you don't hear anything, and you think that's good," she said.

She was so relieved to hear the news from her son that her grandson was okay.

Bob said the loss and injury of the men has surely taken an emotional toll on his son, but he didn't speak to him about that.

"He's a career soldier. He's very depressed, but he says, 'I'm good to go.'"

Bob and his wife plan to visit their son, who has a girlfriend and two children in New Brunswick, when he comes back to Galetown for the funerals of the fallen soldiers.

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### ARE WE DONE YET

(G - General)

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### WELCOME BACK

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Please email comments to: [ibtsl@bellnet.ca](mailto:ibtsl@bellnet.ca)

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