

**General Ramsey Withers, CMM, CStJ, CD  
(RRMC RMC 1952 – H2951)  
Chief of the Defence Staff  
1980 to 1983**



He served as a Signal Officer with 1 R 22eR in Korea and, when the battalion rotated home, he went to the 1st Commonwealth Division Battle School as an instructor. Returning home I went to Queen's to obtain my electrical engineering degree, graduating in 1954 and taking a young lady away from the university as my wife. We have just celebrated our 55th anniversary.

Postings to regimental field duty at home and in Germany, Staff College and another tour in Germany followed before taking command of a Signal Squadron in Valcartier. I was then posted as the first staff officer appointed to Mobile Command Headquarters. Ottawa came next with CFHQ duty.

In 1970, on promotion to brigadier-general, I formed Canadian Forces Northern Region, in Yellowknife. Returning to Ottawa I had two appointments in NDHQ until 1976 when I went to command Canadian Forces Europe as a major-general. On promotion to lieutenant-general I was appointed VCDS and, in 1980, was promoted to general and appointed CDS.

Retiring in 1983, I was appointed Deputy Minister of Transport Canada. Retiring again, in 1988, I worked in the private sector for ten years. 1988 was also the year I submitted my report on the future of the College, which has been dubbed "the Withers Report", to the Board of Governors.

Today my principal activity is as a volunteer interpreter at the Canadian War Museum with which I have been associated for the last twenty-one years. ('volunteer interpreter: a.k.a. live artifact')

As far as the rest of my class goes, instead of going to university **2861 Dan Loomis (RRMC RMC 1952)** immediately signed up after the news broke, served with 1 RCR and was awarded the Military Cross. **2897 Herb Pitts (RRMC RMC 1952)** was also awarded the MC when serving with 1 and 3 PPCLI. Our third MC was **2967 Chuck Carter (RMC 1952)** who served with the RCE Squadron. **2973 Bob Bull (RRMC 1952)** who served with B Squadron LdSH(RC) was awarded the Belgian Order of Leopold and Croix de Guerre. I have heard say that this makes 1952 the most decorated class per capita up to that time. Afghanistan may well change it.



**Medals:** CMM – CStJ – Canadian Korea Volunteer – Canadian Korea – UN Korea - Centennial - Canada 125 - EIIR Silver Jubilee – EIIR Golden Jubilee – CD and 2 Bars

**General Ramsey Muir WITHERS, CMM, CStJ, CD, DEng, DMil Sc, PEng, LLD**  
**Chief of the Defence Staff**  
**1980 to 1983**

Born:	28 July 1930	Scarborough, Ontario
Married:	1954	Alison Sanders (who died 11 October 2011)
Children:	1 Son	James Scott Withers (Caroline)
	2 Twin Daughters	Leslie Susan Gray (Paul) Deidre Ann Brown (John)
Died:	24 December 2014	Kanata, Ontario

**Honours**

Canada Gazette

31/05/1980	CMM	Principal Commander Order of Military Merit	General
17/12/1977	CMM	Commander Order of Military Merit	Lieutenant-General
18/12/1980+	CStJ	Commander Order of St. John	Lieutenant-General
01/09/1960	CD	Canadian Forces Decoration and two bars	Captai

**Military**

01/09/1948	Officer Cadet	Royal Roads Military College, Victoria, BC – <b>H2951</b>
01/09/1950	Officer Cadet	Royal Military College Kingston – <b>2951</b>
01/06/1952	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	Commissioned in the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals
02/06/1952	Lieutenant	To Korea to join 1 <sup>st</sup> Royal 22e Regiment as a Signals Officer
01/03/1953	Lieutenant	1 <sup>st</sup> Commonwealth Division Battle School in Japan OC Signals Wing
01/03/1953	Lieutenant	Queen's University to complete his Electrical Engineering Degree
15/06/1954	Lieutenant	Graduate as Electrical Engineer Queen's University
20/06/1954	Lieutenant	Royal Canadian School of Signals as Training Officer 5 Squadron
15/06/1955	Lieutenant	Second in Command Recruit and Junior NCO Training Squadron
15/06/1956	Lieutenant	Commanded the Junior NCO Training Troop
01/06/1957	Captain	Regimental Signals Officer Royal Canadian Dragoons CFB Petawawa
01/06/1958	Captain	Regimental Signals Officer RCD in Germany
01/09/1959	Captain	Canadian Army College two year course – top student
10/06/1961	Captain	Posted to 4 Cdn Infantry Brigade Group Soest, Germany GSO3 Operations
01/05/1962	Major	Brigade Major 4 CIBG – Chief of Staff of 4 CIBG
01/08/1963	Major	Britain's Joint Services College Course 28 Cdn Army Guest Student
01/09/1964	Major	Commanding Officer 6 Signal Squadron, Valcartier, Quebec
01/07/1965	Major	First Staff Officer with Mobile Command, Montreal and 1 <sup>st</sup> Command Sec'y
01/06/1966	LCol	Senior Staff Officer Foreign Operations Mobile Command
01/06/1967	LCol	Set up the Signal Squadron in Valcartier, Quebec
01/08/1968	LCol	Executive Assistant to the Chief of the Defence Staff General Allard
01/12/1968	Colonel	Executive Assistant to the Chief of the Defence Staff General Sharp
01/04/1970	BGen	1 <sup>st</sup> Commander Canadian Forces Northern Region Yellowknife, NWT
01/06/1973	BGen	Director General Management Information Systems
01/03/1975	MGen	Associate Deputy Minister (Policy) and Chief of Evaluation
01/06/1976	MGen	Command Canadian Forces Europe
01/06/1977	LGen	Vice Chief of the Defence Staff NDHQ HQ
31/05/1980	General	Chief of Defence Staff
01/07/1983	General	Retire

1<sup>st</sup> Post-WWII Officer to reach General Rank which he did at the age of 39

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After Retiring

1983	Honorary Col	Governor General Foot Guards
1983	Deputy Minister	Transport Canada (Ministers Pépin, Axworthy, Mazankowski and Crosbie)
1988	Deputy Minister	Retired from Transport Canada
1989	HCol	Governor General Foot Guards HCol ends
1988	President	Government Relations Firm
	Director	Aerospace Technology Company
	Consultant	Office of the Auditor General
	Chairman	Industry Government Relations Firm
	Founding Chair	Another Industry Government Relations Firm
1998	Retired	Retired from the above
1988	Hon Chair	Cdn War Museum\ Undergraduate Programs (ending with <i>Withers Report</i> )
1998	Chair	Royal Military College Board of Governors Study on
1998	Trustee	Canadian Museum of Civilization
1998	Hon VP	Boy Scouts of Canada