



THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 005
THE LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS



NEWSLETTER RCL Branch 005 Nr. 2020-04

In this edition:

From the President

From Colonel Tim R. Young
Canadian Defence Attaché – The Netherlands

Column Comrade Berry Swarthoff

Upcoming:

All activities of RCL Branch 005 have been cancelled
until June 1st or so much longer as necessary.

Check regularly the agenda on our website

and our Facebook account for further developments.

Have a look on the [agenda](#)

For the latest news: [Facebook](#).

There are far more pictures on our website. To have a look: click: [album](#)

Let's look ahead positively





The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



BACKGROUND STORY

Varied column with information on a specific topic

Can be viewed by clicking somewhere on this page.

Drama in Nova Scotia

Also hits hard in the Netherlands

Among the victims a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Further featured: Royal Canadian Mounted Police



From the President.

Dear Friends and Comrades,

We are into the second month of our intelligent lockdown of COVID-19, and we are all looking forward to the end or at least a relaxing of the rules and regulations, in order to start our regular way of work and life. For now, stay safe and healthy.

All our branch activities are put on hold until further notice or until we can congregate in groups larger than three. However, the executive is keeping contact with each other and are planning on how to go on from here especially with new standards such as the 1.5 meter or the alternative remembrance that some organizations already proposing. Results of this will be published in due time, that way we are all on the same page as far as we can and cannot do.

Other important items that need to be mentioned are the awards that were received by our comrades and friends in the Order of Orange Nassau this year's Kings day awards.

Member in the Order of Orange-Nassau: Elly van Wakeren- van Merkestijn

Member in the Order of Orange-Nassau: Paul Versijp

Knight in the Order of Orange-Nassau: Marietje Eggink- ten Velde

All of them congratulations on obtaining this prestigious award for services rendered to the community.

Because we are having no activities such as remembrance, social or executive meetings we are bringing the newsletter out once every three months after this one. At least for the time being. Actual or hot news will be circulated via our Facebook page and other important items will be individually mailed to our members directly.

Martin Reelick

President

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005

"The Liberation of the Netherlands"





From Colonel Tim R. Young.

Canadian Defence Attaché – The Netherlands

75 Years of Liberation of The Netherlands – Reflections of a Canadian Soldier.

As we approach Remembrance and Liberation Day in The Netherlands on the 4th and 5th of May respectively, we find humanity embroiled in another global battle, the battle against COVID-19. To that end, while we are all preoccupied with doing our part to defeat this dreadful virus, we will solemnly remember the victims of wartime violence and celebrate the 75th liberation of The Netherlands in a manner no one would have imagined a few short weeks ago. Canada has a long and very close relationship with The Netherlands. The onslaught of the Corona virus has led to the postponement of nearly 80 of the over 140 commemorative events that Canada was supporting over the period of the 75th Anniversary. It also impacted 33 Canadian groups that were planning to take part in those celebrations. As we take time for reflection on the Dutch Remembrance and Liberation Days this May, on behalf of all Canadians, I would like to thank The Netherlands for the manner in which they continue to honour and respect Canada's fallen soldiers, sailors, and aviators - You are the guardians of Canada's war dead.



There are 5,712 Canadian Forces service members buried in 199 cemeteries in The Netherlands. This figure includes 55 service personnel from First Nations communities and 14 from Newfoundland. The large majority of these personnel are buried in three Commonwealth War Cemeteries in Bergen op Zoom, Holten and Groesbeek. The other 196 cemeteries are dispersed throughout the country, amongst local communities where the majority are aviators who are laid to rest in close proximity to where their aircraft was brought down. To the average Canadian, the bespoke manner in which Dutch people honour our war dead is something to behold. The entire nation in one way, shape, or form is engaged in the act of remembrance.

It is simply impossible to name every Dutch group or activity that is involved with commemorating Canada's contribution to the liberation of The Netherlands. Nevertheless, the ingenuity behind how Dutch communities, the caretakers of our fallen, recognize the sacrifices Canadians have made for their freedom is nothing short of incredible. The scope of the activities ranges from organizations that span the whole country to smaller, local groups that are entirely dedicated to specific events that happened in their own communities. There are festivals, museums, marching bands, re-enactors, commemorative events, and many imaginative projects. Furthermore, families and individuals become involved in some capacity. Whether it is sponsoring a Canadian Veteran in their home when they come to visit their lost comrades, attending a commemoration, bloemenkinderen (flower children) laying flowers on graves, or placing a candle on a grave on Christmas Eve, there is some way everyone can contribute. Even the world renowned 4-daagse – Fours Days March in Nijmegen pays a tribute to Canada's and other nations fallen during the event.



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



In short, at every level from families to the National 4-5 May Committee, the value of freedom is woven into the very fabric of every Dutch citizen.

Freedom is one of the cornerstones that defines the national identity of both Canada and the Netherlands. In fact, freedom is so important to our identities that it is cited in the lyrics of both national anthems – O Canada and Wilhelmus, which also happens to be the oldest national anthem in the world.

There is however a nuance to how freedom is regarded in both countries, which can be seen in the manner how the Dutch celebrate and commemorate freedom, and why Canadians flock to The Netherlands to participate in those events. In particular, since Confederation in 1867, Canada has not experienced a direct threat to its sovereignty in the same manner as The Netherlands had in World War 2.

Canadians have not had to directly endure the hardship and devastation of fighting to regain freedom on Canadian soil. Moreover, Canada has always supported the fight against tyranny by sending its armed forces to foreign lands. As such, to fully understand the value of freedom and the struggle and sacrifices made to regain it, Canadians go to Europe and other far-off lands.

They particularly come to The Netherlands to talk to people, to walk the battlefields, and to see first-hand the Canadian soldiers' graves to learn and comprehend the destruction and impact that the Second World War had to preserve freedom. This important point is a key tenant ingrained in Dutch culture, and whether attending a commemoration, or a festival, the impact of the war still to this day, has a real bearing on Dutch people, as the value of freedom has never been taken for granted.

In recent times, the number of veterans and civilians that experienced the perils and recounted the hard lessons of the Second World War have begun to dwindle. People have started to speculate on how the liberation of The Netherlands will be commemorated once they have all passed. Veterans themselves perhaps express it best through the lyrics of a Bing Crosby song, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away."

World War Two veterans are being replaced by younger generations, all who have served in the same regiments as their forefathers. Numerous groups of these veterans were poised to come to The Netherlands this May, as they too come to be reminded of the impacts of war and pay tribute to their brothers in arms. While veterans are a catalyst to remembrance, the future actually rests with our younger generations. The power of youth cannot be underestimated as Dutch high school students have led commemorative events in Canadian War Cemeteries for their visiting Canadian high school guests. The hard lessons of war are not lost on Dutch youth and it is truly inspirational to see them share their understanding of freedom with their foreign friends.

Before the effects of COVID-19 led to the postponement of this year's celebrations, there were over 2,200 Canadian school children planning to join the remembrance and liberation ceremonies this spring. While every commemoration honouring Canada's World War 2 service personnel is steadfastly attended by members of the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces, the Canadian Armed Forces also pays tribute to Dutch service personnel who lost their lives in service of their country.



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



For example, each year on the 4th of May, the Canadian Armed Forces participates in the Royal Netherlands Air Force remembrance parade at Memorial Square - the Obelisk, at Soesterberg Air Base. During this parade a special tribute is made to all Dutch aircrew that lost their lives in the previous calendar year. The Canadian Armed Forces also pays tribute to the Dutch resistance from World War 2 at the Prins Bernhard Stoottroepen commemoration. This unique Infantry Regiment was formed by Prins Bernhard in 1944 from a group of resistance fighters.

The Canadian Armed Forces has even attended a joint memorial in Hoogkerk, where both nations honoured two Canadian infantrymen that fell in the Battle of Groningen, the aircrew of an allied bomber, and a Dutch Mortarman serving with 13 Infanteriebataljon, 11 Luchtmobiele Brigade of the Royal Netherlands Army. Korporaal Kevin Roggeveld was recently killed on operations in Mali in 2016. Canada along with many other countries that make up the diplomatic community in The Netherlands, attend other nations commemorative events to pay tribute to their service personnel that also lost their lives in service of their nation.

Throughout the period of the 75th Anniversary, the Canadian Embassy had planned to support over 140 events, which were grouped in clusters with multiple ceremonies occurring on the same day throughout the country. In order to support this significant undertaking, it took a whole of embassy approach consisting of members of the Canadian Armed Forces, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada Border Services Agency, Global Affairs Canada, other Canadian Diplomats, and Local Engaged Employees. As Canadian Embassy staff, we are deeply touched and immensely proud that the Dutch members of our team eagerly volunteered to represent Canada at some of these events, showing again their commitment to remembrance.

As a Canadian soldier and veteran serving in the Netherlands, it is truly extraordinary to see the breadth of the efforts to honour Canada's fallen. It has been remarkable to appreciate: seeing the numerous Canadian flags lining the streets marking the day a city or a village was liberated, like in Apeldoorn; watching the Royal Canadian Legion (Netherlands Branch) proudly support a local commemoration with a Colour Party; reading the profile of a Canadian soldier buried in Groesbeek War Cemetery written by a Faces-to-Graves volunteer; watching a convoy of 'Keep-Them-Rolling' restored military vehicles with their re-enactors drive into a memorial site; listening to a Dutch volunteer talk about Canadian service members buried in Holten War Cemetery; observing an entire community come together to tell the tragic events of the fate of an aircraft like Halifax Bomber L9561 in Wons; working with a local community to make a case to identify the grave of a missing-in-action Canadian soldier such as Lieutenant John G. Kavanagh in Steenderen; and proudly standing at the closing scene of Bergen op Zoom's theatre presentation Supersum and sing Canada's national anthem side by side with hundreds of local citizens. It is clear that 75 years later the loss of those 5,712 Canadian soldiers, sailors, and aviators has not been in vain.

This year the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a new reality to the May 4th and 5th commemorations and celebrations, but it has not deterred the Dutch.



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



They refuse to be denied their 75th Anniversary party, and as a matter of fact, preparations have already begun to transform this year's plans into '75+1 Years of Liberation'. The pandemic will equally not discourage Canadians as we too look forward to being there next year, side-by-side with our Dutch friends.

Lest we forget – N'oublions jamais - Opdat wij niet vergeten.

Jim R. Young

Colonel

Canadian Defence Attaché – The Netherlands





The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



Wreath laying at the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Veghel, 15 September 2019. Local children play a significant role in commemorative events. Canadian Defence Attaché Colonel Tim Young.



Commemoration at Holten Canadian War Cemetery June 2019 by The North Shore Regiment, Regimental Veterans, Royal Canadian Legion (Netherlands), Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canadian and Dutch school children.



World War 2 Veteran Pilot Lloyd Bentley from Brantford, Ontario speaking with high school children at Oosterbeek War Cemetery 22 September 2019.



Commemoration at 'Man with Two Hats' Monument in Apeldoorn 2018. Canadian Defence Attaché, Colonel Tim Young with the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 (The Netherlands) Colour Party.



Wreath laying at Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery 2019. Ambassador Lisa Helfand and Canadian Defence Attaché, Colonel Tim Young.



De First Nations in The Second World War.

Canada declared war on Germany on September 10, 1939, and for the second time in just over two decades, the country's indigenous community responded quickly.

Voluntary registration for the war.

Thousands served in the armed forces in any conflict, mostly voluntarily. Officially, about 4,000 First Nations soldiers served abroad in World War I, while 4,250 First Nations soldiers served in World War II. Recent research has shown that thousands of other First Nations, Métis and Inuit soldiers (such as Labrador's John Shiwak, who served in World War I) volunteered without identifying themselves as a First Nation.

In total, more than 500 native soldiers died and many more were injured or captured in both World Wars. On the home front, most indigenous communities participated in the national war effort in various ways, by donating money and working for the war industry. Despite their contributions and sacrifices, however, the indigenous peoples remained marginalized, without fundamental civil rights such as the right to vote.

After that, native veterans were largely forgotten until they started organizing and running campaigns for recognition of their sacrifices and return due to grievances about the benefits to veterans from the 1970s to the 2000s. Perseverance paid off, with a consensus report emerging in 2001 was accepted by both the First Nations veteran organizations and the government, followed by a public apology and an offer of compensation in 2003. Traditionally, the grievances of the veterans of Métis and Inuit have not been the same. However, in recent years, native veterans have gained much more recognition in local and national memorials, including Aboriginal Veterans Day on November 8 (inaugurated by Winnipeg City Council in 1994) and a National Aboriginal Veterans Monument in Ottawa (unveiled in 2001). So that they are not forgotten.

National Aboriginal Veterans Monument Ottawa





Francis "Peggy" Pegahmagabow

The deadliest sniper of WWI

Francis Pegahmagabow was born in 1889 on the Parry Island Indian Reserve (now the Wasauksing First Nation), an Ojibwa community near Parry Sound, Ontario. When he is three, his father dies and his mother returns to her home in the Henvey Inlet First Nation.

After spending so much of his childhood hunting, Pegahmagabow turns out to be a uniquely skilled sniper. He sneaks into no man's land under darkness, buries himself in cover and waits patiently for a German helmet to fill his eyes.

It is this mix of patience and infallible aim that makes him the deadliest sniper on both fronts.

By the time of his discharge in 1919, Pegahmagabow is the most decorated First Nations soldier in Canadian history. He received the Military Medal in 1916 and earns two bars, becoming one of only 37 Canadians to win the Military Medal with two bars. He has also been awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.



Indigenous People in World War II

A veteran returns.

Chief Joe Dreaver, of Mistawasis Cree Band in Saskatchewan, served in both world wars. During World War I, he was a sapper and earned the Military Medal, an award for bravery in the field, in Belgium. When war broke out again, he immediately signed up, left his farm, and brought 17 men, including three of his sons. At the age of 48, he was too old for overseas service and stayed with the Veterans' Guard in Canada, watching prisoners of war in Alberta.



Joe Dreaver

An extraordinary family offering.

John McLeod, an Ojibwa, served abroad in World War I and was a member of the Veterans' Guard during World War II. Six of his sons and one of his daughters volunteered. Two sons lost their lives and another two were injured. In 1972, John's wife, Mary, became the first native woman to be called the Memorial Cross Mother of Canada, and placed a wreath at the National War Memorial in Ottawa on Remembrance Day on behalf of all Canadian mothers who had lost children to the war.



Bravery in Action.

Charles Byce, Cree. Charles enlisted in the Lake Superior Regiment (motorcycle), received the Military Medal in the Netherlands and the Distinguished Conduct Medal in the Rhineland campaign, and his participation in the fighting around the Rhine was unprecedented. Adequate weapons and with a handful of men against an almost hopeless action will forever remain an excellent example for all ranks of the regiment.



Charles Byce

Prince of the Brigade.

Thomas George Prince, an Ojibwa from Manitoba, volunteered as a paratrooper. He served with the elite Canadian-American commando unit called the First Special Service Force that became known to the Germans as the Devil's Brigade. He earned the military medal in combat in Italy and the Silver Star, an American award for courage, for his exploration work in France. These high awards were presented to him by King George VI at Buckingham Palace.



Thomas George Prince

A leading career.

Brigadier Oliver Milton Martin, a Mohawk from the Six Nations Grand River Reserve, reached the highest military rank ever held by a native. During the First World War he served in the army as well as in the air force. During World War II, he oversaw the training of hundreds of recruits in Canada. For his 20 years of excellent service, he received the Colonial Aid Award.



O.M. Martin

A man of many talents.

David Greyyes, a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Band in Saskatchewan, served in many difficult military positions in seven European countries, including commanding a mortar platoon in Italy. During the Italian campaign, he earned the Greek Military Cross (third class) for bravery in supporting the Greek Mountain Brigade. In 1977 he received the Order of Canada. His quote reads: "Athlete, soldier, farmer, former chief of the Muskeg Lake Reserve, Saskatchewan, and ultimately director of First Nation affairs in the Maritime and Alberta regions. Long and devoted service to his people, often under difficult circumstances."



David Greyyes

In their own words.

• "We are proud of the word volunteer. Nobody forced us. We were good Canadians - patriots - we fought for our country." - Syd Moore, World War II veteran



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



- "In Cree we say 'Kahgee pohn nuts took' on Remembrance Day. It means 'the fight is over'." - Irene Plante, veteran widow
- "The Colonel begins to read the 36 names of our fallen. Tears are in his eyes. He faltered and handed the paper to the adjutant, who folded it gently and put it in his pocket and said softly, "It's not necessary. They were comrades. We remember. - James Brady, World War II veteran.

The Legacy.

The brave native men and women who left their homes during the Second World War to contribute to the struggle for peace were true heroes. The additional challenges they faced and overcome make their performance all the more remarkable.

Brothers-in-arms.

Tommy and Morris Prince,

Sergeant Tommy Prince (R), M.M., 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, with his brother Private Morris Prince, February 12, 1945.



Both of the Brokenhead Band of Ojibwa.



“In Holland we were Canadians, at Home we were Indians”

The First Nations in the Netherlands.

For many years, many First Nations took part in pilgrimage trips to the Netherlands to celebrate the liberation together with the Netherlands.

Apeldoorn – Groesbeek – Holten – Leeuwarden – Groningen – Bergen op Zoom.



Apeldoorn 2000



Holten 1995



Apeldoorn 2000, Ernest Smokey & Howard Anderson, Cree



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



Grand Chief Howard Anderson, Cree Manitoba



Ernest Smokey does a ceremony, Holten 1995



**Grand chief Anderson & Ernest Smokey,
Apeldoorn Palais Het Loo**



First Nation, Aboriginal, Indigenous Beaded Poppy



The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 the Liberation of the Netherlands



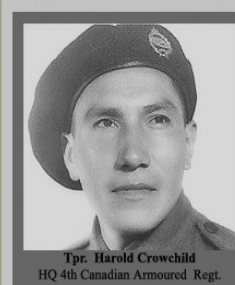
The Aboriginal tribute list.



ASgt. George Alexander Campion
WWII - Military Medal (MM)
Loyal Edmonton Regiment - R.C.L.C.



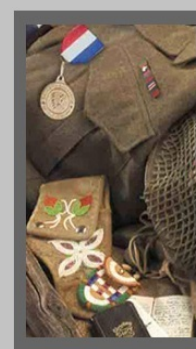
Aboriginal Veterans Monument - Ottawa



Tpr. Harold Crowchild
HQ 4th Canadian Armoured Regt.



Pte. George T. Munroe M.M., 1944



This list now includes 7000 First Nations names that served in all wars.



In Flandre's Fields.

On May 3, 1915, Canadian Military Doctor John McCrae wrote the well-known poem in Flandre's Fields that became famous around the world, and the poppy he described in the poem became the national memorial symbol. Dr Lena heavy shield Russel from the Kainai Tribe translated the poem into Blackfoot, which took 15 years.

Our First Nations friend Glenn Miller sent us this poem. He promoted Dr. Lena to do this.



Glenn Miller

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

Iitstsaahpi awahkaotsiiyiiksi I'niiksi apamoohtsi
Iitohkanaikstoihtsiyaawa.
Pisatssaisskiitsi itawaawattohpapokai'yi
Sitokohtsi awoysstaakssiiksi.
Iihtsskskoi'pi nitsitstsiihpinnaani.
Kii spoohtsi, pi'kssiiksi, saakiaawaaksistooyinihkiyi. Aipottaayaawa.
Maatohtoohtowawaiksaawa isskonakssini saainisoohtsi

Niistonnaana anniksao'ki anniiksisska I'nitaiksa.
Maatomaismowa ninoohkattsipaitapiiyihpinnaan.
Ninoohkattoohthki'pinnaan otao'tamisskapssi naato'siwa.
Nimattsini'pinnaan otaiisttahkapssi naato'siwa.
Nitaakomimmihtaahpinnaan. Ninoohkattakomimmotspinnaan.
Kiannohka nita'tamitaihtsiihpinnaan
I'niiksi itaihstaahpi.

Noohkakohkootsiimoka nitaawaawahkaotsiimannaniksi.
No'tsinnaanistsi aii'sistsikooyi.
Nitsitapaapiksi'pinnaan isstaana'kima'tsisi.
Ma'tsika. Niitoohkspinnika.
Ikkamomatskaohsakkinnaniki, niistonnaanaka nitai'nittspinnaanaka.
Nimaataakso'kaahpinnaana.
Kiiwahtao pisatssaisskiitsi itaisaisskiiyi
Awahkaotsiiyiiksi I'niiksi iitstsaahpi apamoohtsi.



Translated into the
Blackfoot Language by
Dr. Lena Russell





" We Will Remember Them".

Mary Greyeyes

Mary Greyeyes was born in the Native American Meskeg Lake Cree Nation in Saskatchewan, Canada in 1920. In June 1942, in the footsteps of her brother who had already entered military service, she traveled to Saskatoon to enlist. As the Sergeant told her of her acceptance, she became the 1st First Nation woman to join the Canadian Armed Forces as a member of the Canadian Women's Army Corps.



The Eagle Staff.

The Department of Defense and the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Eagle Staff is the traveling symbol of unity among Aboriginal women and men in defense, a symbol of the strength, pride and honor of Aboriginal heritage, reminding us that Canada will never forget the legacy of its early peoples.

The Staff represents the First Nation traditions and reinforces the values of inclusivity and respect for all members of the first peoples, both past and present.

The Eagle Staff is also used and honored in the United States.





Big Canoe.

One of the fallen First Nations is buried under his own name at the Canadian Cemetery in Groesbeek. This does not happen often. Respect "Big Canoe" R.I.P. He was killed on March 8, 1945.



BIGCANOE, Pte. THOMAS BERESFORD, B/162220. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, R.C.I.C. 8th March, 1945. Age 19. Son of Thomas H. and Hannah Bigcanoe, of Georgina Island, Ontario. VII. C. 4.



There are about 55 First Nations buried in the Netherlands, who are known, but there will certainly be more because at the recruitment agency they hardly ever used their native names.

Métis - Inuit's - First nations
Let us not forget them now, after 75 years.

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

Berry Swarthoff