



THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 005 THE LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS



NEWSLETTER RCL Branch 005 Nr. 2020-11

In this edition:

Message from the President
Apeldoorn
Hoeksche Waard
Remembrance Day
Poppy Campaign
Column Tonnie Vehof

Upcoming activities: (subject to COVID-19 measures)

Dec. 24. Candle Evening ????
Groesbeek, Holten, Bergen op Zoom
Jan. 24- 2021 New Years Reception
March 28-2021 Annual General Members Meeting

For upcoming events: check our [agenda](#) and for the latest news: [Facebook](#).

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

In this edition:

November is the month of commemoration and remembrance in, predominantly, the Commonwealth countries. The fallen of the First World War and all the wars and armed conflicts since are commemorated.

At 11.11 a.m. on November 11, 1918, a truce came into effect that marked the end of the First World War. That day is known as Remembrance Day or Armistice Day.

Solemn commemorations take place all over the world on, or around this day. November 11 is strictly adhered to in Canada. Regardless of which day of the week it falls.

Obvious is that The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 takes part in commemorations in the Netherlands.

However, also at a local level, individuals play an active role in keeping the memory alive of the Canadian liberators.

In this edition we focus on Tonnie Vehof, he does voluntary work for the local history foundation „Old Deep’n”. Active in a small city in the eastern part of the Netherlands, called Diepenheim.

Read his story about Private Gaston Nadeau, who survived the war but never saw Canada again. His life ended tragically on a sunny day in Diepenheim.



Tonnie Vehof near the headstone for Gaston Nadeau in Holten

Message from the President.

It is rapidly getting towards the end of 2020, and with this the 75th celebration of Christmas and yearend in freedom. Indeed, we had lots of remembrance services and liberation celebrations either cancelled or changed to subdued services and some to a max of two members remembrance services this year. We are looking forward to 2021 and are shortly going to update our calendar, after we contacted all organizing committees and all these dates are off course subjected to cancellations by the organization committees, Governmental (RIVM) and Dominion Command COVID-19 (corona) regulations.



There are two dates for Branch RCL005 that are can be marked:

Our New year's reception is planned for Sunday 24 January 2021 at 13:00.

The Annual General Meeting is planned for Sunday 28 March at 12:00.

All subject to change as per previous mentioned regulations.

Other event dates will be published as soon as we have received the information from the committees.

Just because we have not had the events we originally planned, does not mean we as executive sat still and wait till the cows came home. We had to react fast to changing events and inform all participants etc.

The big one this year is that we have made streamline updates to our administration systems, added a recording secretary for our meetings and for our membership and financial records we have made big steps. The membership records are processed by our membership administrator for our records and the Dominion Command database and works hand in hand with the treasurer.

All have invested lots of time in a new record keeping system and this will be a much improved and trusted record keeping system for all involved. Many thanks to all involved.

That will bring up two things, if you have a change to be made to your membership record please contact the membership administrator at membership@rcl005.org this will then ensure information is correct and you will the receive important information such as Legion Magazine and electronic information via your e-mail address.

For financial information contact the treasurer at treasurer@rcl005.org and you should have received a letter that your membership is due. If not, hereby our memberships are due for 2021 at € 40.00 per member before December 25, 2020 to ensure your active status and too receive the Legion Magazine for 2021. Transfer dues to **IBAN: NL25 ABNA0451117913** commenting with your name and membership number and "Dues 2021".

The big one and we should be proud as members of Branch 005 is the action "Save Mondani", we have collected a substantial amount, and more is coming in. We have as executives on Monday 30 of November presented to them the pledge and funds being transferred to our members Berry and Yvonne.

Which they humbly received and were thankful to the Branch 005 and the Spirit of togetherness.

Donations are still possible and can be made to **IBAN: NL25 ABNA0451117913** mention in the comment "Save Mondani".

Lastly as President I would like to wish all our members and friends of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 a best Seasons Greetings and a very Happy and Healthy 2021.

Martin Reelick

President

The Liberation of the Netherlands Branch 005



Apeldoorn, 08.11.2020.

Sunday, November 8, 2020, despite all the restrictions that we have, there was still an opportunity for a very sober ceremony at „the Man with the two Hats” in Apeldoorn, the Canadian National Monument in the Netherlands.

Mayor Ton Heerts of Apeldoorn and Anita Menninga, chairman of the Liberation '45 Foundation (Apeldoorn) both laid a wreath.



Photo: Archives Apeldoorn

Hoeksche Waard, 09.11.2020.

Lest we forget!

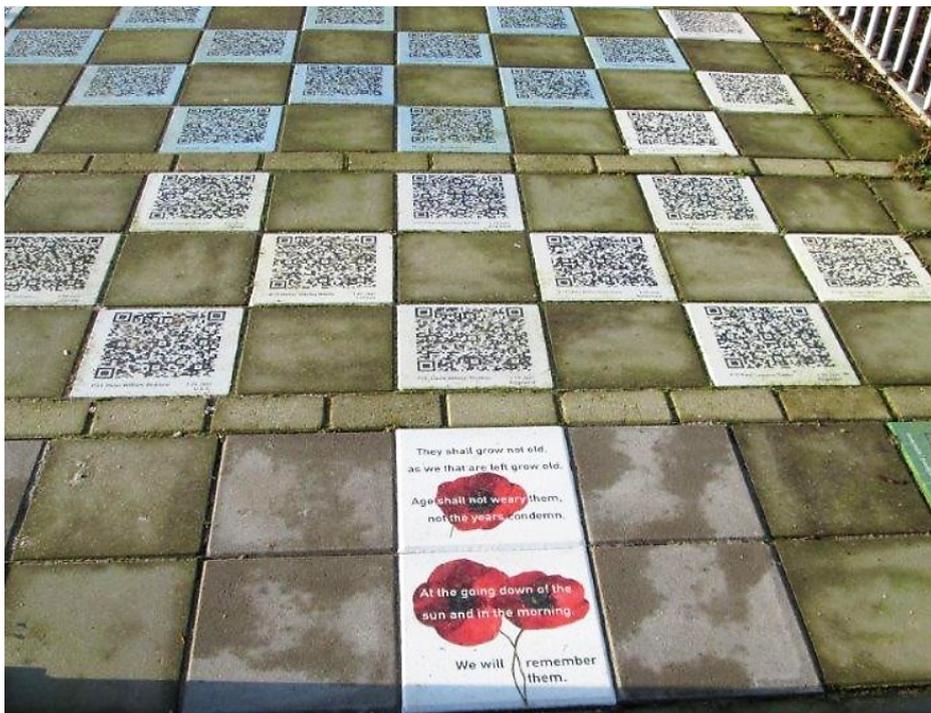
On Monday, in the early evening, a Poppy wreath was placed at the monument on behalf of the Air War Association Hoeksche Waard.

This is to commemorate the killed Dutch and Allied airmen.

It is also a digital monument.

In total, around 120 QR codes can be scanned with the mobile phone at the monument on Antonie van Leeuwenhoekstraat in Oud-Beijerland.

Those, who do so will find information about the foreign crew members, crashes and general information about the (air) war in the Hoeksche Waard.



Text and photos:

Anton de Man

REMEMBRANCE DAY 11.11.2020.

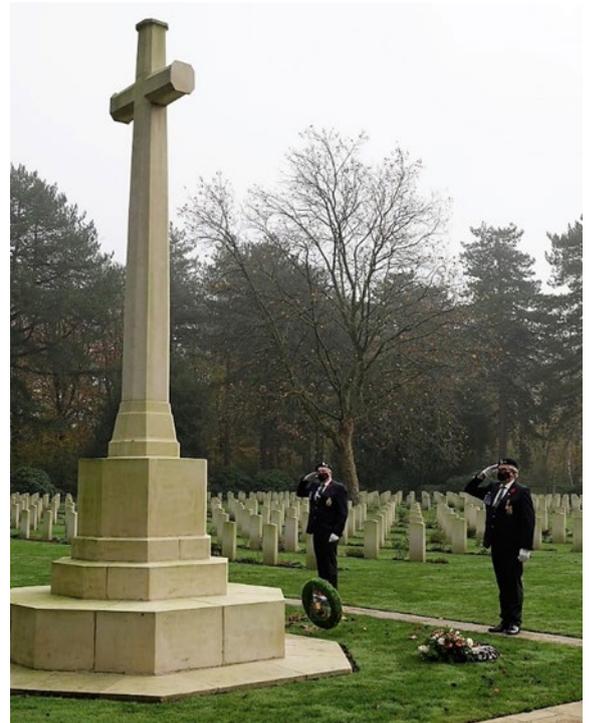
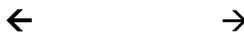
BERGEN OP ZOOM – GROESBEEK - HOLTEN

On November 11, the Anglo-Saxon countries commemorate all military victims who died in wars around the world. On that day in the Netherlands we commemorate our liberators from the Second World War. Every year the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005, “the Liberation of the Netherlands”, is present at the various cemeteries where they are buried. Due to the Corona provisions, this is only possible on a very limited scale this year. However, we will never forget them. That is why the RCL005 board asked two members to lay wreaths and bring a salute on the three large Canadian cemeteries in the Netherlands. In Bergen op Zoom attended RCL005 President Martin Reelick with comrade Don Paauwe; in Groesbeek Poppy Chairman Danny Murphy and Sgt-at Arms Toon van Bussel; and in Holten Liaison Officer Yvonne Swarthoff-Beekman and Comrade Berry Swarthoff.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!



Bergen op Zoom



↓ Groesbeek ↓





Holten (Video: [click on photo above](#)) ↑

Photos:

Bergen op Zoom: [Monique Bogerman](#)

Groesbeek: [Mieke van Bussel](#)

Holten: [Anneke Poppenk](#)

In addition to the general ceremonies, photos above, there was extra attention in Bergen op Zoom, Holten and Groesbeek for a personal token of respect.

Martin Reelick (L) and Don Paauwe placed their Poppies on the headstone of L.Cpl. M.K. Northrup.

At the Canadian Cemetery Holten, Herman Sligman privately laid a wreath at the grave of Canloan Officer CDN/171 Lt. J.A. Laurie, MC.



At the Canadian Cemetery Groesbeek, Gerrit Bruggink privately laid his Poppy on the headstone of Sergeant A. Cosens, V.C. of the “Queen’s Own’s Rifles of Canada”.

More than 70 soldiers of the QOR are buried here.



Poppy Campaign 2020.

Column Gerrit Bruggink.

The year 2020 has become a very strange year. We can safely conclude that as the year draws to a close.

For many people the thought "how do I get through the COVID-19 pandemic properly" is the main theme.

This year we, the Dutch people, commemorate 75 years of living in freedom. The association COVID vs OCCUPIER has already been made many times in the Netherlands. Not being free in doing what you want explains that to some extent.

A moment of reflection counts twice this year.

Honouring and remembering is exactly what the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 005 „the Liberation of the Netherlands” stands for.

It is known that not only the victims of the First World War are commemorated on November 11 in many countries around the world. Also, those who gave their lives in World War II and in all armed conflicts and peace keeping operations since then. The Poppy symbolizes this.

We also know that COMMEMORATION has not yet become commonplace, that is why RCL Branch 005 also provides education about this theme at schools.

Our annual Poppy Campaign fits the theme: “WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”.

Due to the many rules we have to observe currently we have opted for a broader approach. Many associations have been approached to actively participate in our Poppy Campaign. In many cases, however, this turned out to be "a bridge too far". However, attention has been paid to this in several places.

Social media helped us with this. Poppies and the accompanying poem "In Flanders Fields" appeared on several accounts. This is also the case with the association "Keep Them Rolling".

After a promotional talk on my part, KTR has decided to provide all members with a Poppy.

Their planned events did not take place and so there was a substantial amount that they decided to transfer to our Poppy fund after deliberation in the board and consultation with their members

Gratefully accepted, of course.



If board members propagate the campaign in this way, it must be a success.

Chapeau!!





A number of shops and stores in my region (the eastern part of the Netherlands) were also willing to support our campaign.

Snack bar Hoogstraat
in Hengelo (Gld)



Blokker Retail in Zelhem ↓

Even the BSA CLUB paid attention to the Poppy.



Gerrit Bruggink

Column Tonnie Vehof.

Preface.

Keeping the memory of the Second World War alive as a wise lesson in life. To remain aware of the importance of peace and freedom. With that in mind, the Canadian War Graves Netherlands Foundation was established in 2018 in Bergen op Zoom. Bergen op Zoom, Holten and Groesbeek join forces. In these three places are large Canadian war cemeteries with fallen from the Second World War.

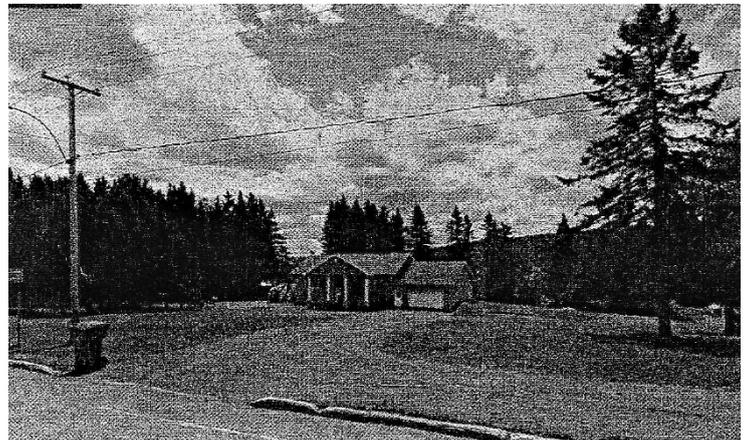
In each of these three, an organization is active that is looking for a way to keep that past alive. They have now found each other in the Faces to Graves Foundation. This aims to find photos and stories behind the names on the tombstones in those cemeteries. Because in every grave lies someone who had a father and mother, brothers, sisters, a girlfriend, a fiancé. Many of them were married and left behind a wife and perhaps one or more children.

As a volunteer of our Local History Foundation I started research to learn more about the background of the Canadian liberator Gaston Nadeau.



Joseph Herménégilde Gaston Nadeau, nicknamed Gaston, was born April 21, 1921 in Sainte-Germaine du Lac-Etchemin, Dorchester County; approximately 120 km southeast of Quebec.

When Gaston was born, he had an older sister, Bernadette from June 11, 1918 and a brother, Maurice from August 15, 1919. At the time he enlisted in the army, ten children were born in the family. His youngest sister, Lise, was born on June 18, 1944. Gaston grew up on Lac-Etchemin in the province of Quebec (French speaking) on his parents' farm. An agricultural company with a lot of work to do. Cows and sheep were kept and potatoes and various grains were grown in the fields.



Farmhouse of the family anno 2015

After primary school he attended an agricultural school for a few more years. When he was 14 years old, he started working at home, extra hands were welcome on the farm.

In that region, especially at that time, it was not uncommon for farmers' sons getting to work at home rather young. The crisis years hit Canada extremely hard, including the agricultural sector.

Gaston moved to [Timmins, Ontario](#), when he was eighteen. About 800 miles from his childhood home. There he got his driver's license and became a driver. He drove trucks and taxis.

In the meantime, World War II had started in Europe. During that time, many men in Canada signed up for the military. The unemployment was high and poverty was wide spread, also in the countryside.

When he was 21 years old, Gaston volunteered in Toronto for the Canadian Army. His health report stated that he was healthy. He made a firm and stable impression and he seemed like an energetic person.

Gaston had little interest in being trained as an infantryman, his ambition was to be deployed as a Military Truck Driver. He was found suitable for this and then he signed the Attestation Paper of the Canadian Army. He was conscripted under registration number B-137524.

In 1943 Gaston was initially assigned to the Voltigeurs de Quebec. He received basic training at the [army base in Saint-Gabriel-de-Valcartier](#). He received further training at Camp Aldershot.

But he also had to deal with military discipline. Twice he was withheld pay; the first time because the maintenance of his weapon was poor, as the platoon commander made clear to him. The second time because he had not been careful enough in handing out the combat rations.

In 1944, assigned to the [Royal 22nd Regiment](#), in active duty on the Italian theatre he was seriously injured. His unit had come under heavy fire. With seven gunshot wounds to his left thigh, he was transferred to the hospital ship Empire Clyde for a rehabilitation period of approximately 8 weeks.

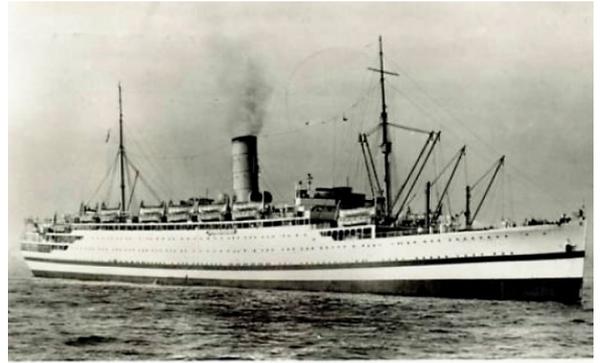
E.B. CONFIDENTIAL R. Gans

No. of enclosure in Form 48 _____
 Serial No. in A. & D. Book _____ or in Form 38 _____
 Army Form I 1224
 R.A.F. Form 39

HOSPITAL OR SICK LIST RECORD CARD.

Surname NADEAU Christian Names Y
 Rank PA Unit Royal 22 Regt
 Army or R.A.F. No. 1018752 Branch or Trade _____
 Age 22 Total Service 1 1/2 Under instruction as _____
 Hospital or Station rendering this form Hospital Ship "Empire Clyde"
 Dates of:—
 Arrival as direct admission _____ from _____
 " transfer 10.4.44 from 14th CAI Gen. Hosp
 Discharge to duty _____
 " as an invalid or to unit for invaliding _____
 Transfer _____ to _____
 Death _____
 Number of days under treatment _____

CLINICAL NOTES:
 Disease or injury MULTIPLE WOUNDS L THIGH
 New disease supervening, and date _____
 Operation, nature and date _____



H.M.T. "EMPIRE CLYDE"

The parents were informed that their son was injured but alive.

Noting that he was not fit enough for the first three months, he left the hospital and returned to England in April 1944 for further recovery.

His youngest sister was born during his rehabilitation in England.

After about three months he was approved for active duty and was assigned to the 22nd Regiment of the [Royal Canadian Army Service Corps \(RCASC\)](#). The military's logistics service providers.

Data patient

In February 1945 Gaston returned to the battlefield in northwestern Europe. His unit was charged with supporting the 4th Medium Regiment of the Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA), which was part of the 2nd Canadian Army Corps.

The advance of the Canadians and the fierce fighting they fought have been sufficiently described and we will skip this specification.

After the unconditional surrender of the German troops on May 8, 1945 (Victory Europe Day), Canadian troops, insofar as not charged with duties in Germany, encamped in the Netherlands.

Men of the 23rd Field Regiment RCA and the 4th Medium Regiment of RCA were stationed in the immediate vicinity of Diepenheim. The unit, to which Gaston Nadeau belonged, also stayed there. Tired of the battle and longing for and waiting for the return trip to Canada.

That Saturday, May 12, 1945, was a beautiful day. The troops of the 4th Medium Regiment had been authorized for a "recreational parade". In other words: free of service, do what you like.

Gaston, along with five comrades: Auchu, Austin, Bernard, Day and Stratford, went for a swim in the pond of a water mill nearby.



It was known that he was not a good swimmer, in addition, his left leg as a result of the injuries, also played tricks.



Although he was careful not to enter too deep water, he suddenly disappeared under water.

He may have been sucked down by the swirling water that had washed out a deep hole. Rescue efforts by the colleagues were in vain and resuscitation was no longer of any use. An army doctor called in could only determine death by drowning.

His parents in Canada were informed of the fatal drama and were told that their son Gaston had come to a tragic end. The comrades of the 4th Medium Regiment were also deeply shocked by this drama.

FIFTH WITNESS; B133908 Pte Day, C. W., 4 Cdn Med Regt Pl RCASC having been duly sworn states;

I am B133908 Pte Day, C. W., 4 Cdn Med Regt Pl RCASC. At approx 1630 hrs 12 May 45 I went swimming in a stream below a mill pond about 1 mile from my unit along with 4 other members of my Pl. Pte Nadeau was with us and it was not until Mr. Austin called me to assist in diving for Pte Nadeau that I was aware he had gone under the water. In about 15 minutes in a hole not far from where he had disappeared I located the body. I assisted in carrying out artificial respiration until an M.O. arrived and he pronounced Pte Nadeau dead.

Certified a true copy of the original.

F. J. Mills Capt
(F. J. Mills) Capt

Signature of Witness

As usual, a report was drawn up by the commander and a witness statement was attached.

Based on this, a certificate of death was issued by the province of Ontario. Cause of death was reported: drowned while swimming in a mill pond.

The victim was given a (temporary) field grave not far from the site of the encampment.

Gaston was later given a grave in the general cemetery in Diepenheim, next to the two British soldiers, Wilson and Stacey, who had died during the liberation of Diepenheim.

The final resting place for Gaston Nadeau is at the Canadian Military Cemetery in Holten.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

23. DATE OF DEATH May 12th, 1945.
(Month by name) (Day) (Year)

24. I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased from _____ 19____
to _____ 19____, and last saw h_____ alive on _____ 19____

I Immediate cause Give disease, injury, or complication which caused death, or the mode of dying, such as heart failure, asphyxia, asthma, etc.	CAUSE OF DEATH	DURATION		
		Yrs.	Mo.	Dys.
(a) <u>Drowning.</u>	due to			
Morbid conditions, if any, giving rise to immediate cause. (stated in order proceeding backwards from immediate cause).	(b) _____			
	(c) _____			
II Other morbid conditions (if important) contributing to death but not causally related to immediate cause.	_____			

25. If a woman, was the death associated with pregnancy? _____ Duration _____ Was there a delivery? _____

26. Was there a surgical operation? _____ Date of operation _____ 19____
State findings _____ Was there an autopsy? _____

27. If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also the following:—
Accident, suicide or homicide? Accident. Date of injury _____ 19____
Manner of injury Drowned while bathing in a mill pond's.
Nature of injury _____
(How notated)

Specify whether injury occurred in INDUSTRY, in HOME, or in PUBLIC PLACE _____

With consult the reverse side before making out certificate.

1202/1/T/9 12.H.13 195
B.137524 Private
G. Nadeau
Royal Canadian
Army Service Corps
12th May 1945 Age 24
(Cross)
Fils de
M. et M^{de}. Evangeliste Nadeau,
Ste. Germaine,
Dorchester, P.Q.

On August 9, 1946, he was reburied in Plot 12, Row H, grave number 13.

12-5-45 AWARDS—CANADIAN ARMY (ACTIVE) 1965 M

UB.
M-5022/1-48 (3807)
H.Q. 17-2-43-8

FILE NO. 405-N-3699

NADEAU Gaston	B-137524	Sol.	R.C.A.S.C.
SURNAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	REG. NO.	RANK ON DISCHARGE	C.A.S.F. UNIT

WAR SERVICE
BADGE (CLASS): NO. DATE DESPATCHED:

ADDRESS:

CAMPAIGN MEDALS	REGISTRATION NUMBER AND DATE DESPATCHED
1939-45 Star	
Italy Star	
France & Germany Star	3847 20-10-49
Defence Medal	
War Medal	
CVSM & Clasp	

(THE REVERSE TO BE USED FOR ESTATE PURPOSES)



In 1949 he was posthumously awarded the following awards:

1939-1945 Star - Italy Star - France & Germany Star - Defense Medal - War Medal - Canadian Volunteer Service Medal (CVSM) with overseas service bar.

In 1948 two ladies from Diepenheim received permission from The Commonwealth War Graves Commission to adopt the grave of Gaston Nadeau.

In the nineties of the last century, uniformity was chosen and the adoption of war graves in Holten was abolished.

Gaston Nadeau, he survived the war, died of a little relaxation in peacetime and he was buried three times.

How bitter fate can be.

Tonnie Vehof



Unless otherwise stated: photos by courtesy of Tonnie Vehof or by the Nadeau family. (Editor)