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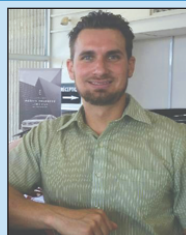


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# Remembrance Day



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Supplement  
November 5, 2015



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## Remembrance Day

*"We honour those who have given their lives serving Canadians  
and helping people of other nations."*

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Councillor  
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# Sherbrooke veteran Roland Moisan to receive French honour on Sunday

By Matthew McCully  
SHERBROOKE

On Sunday, Nov. 8, six veterans from Sherbrooke and surrounding areas will be awarded the rank of Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour during Remembrance Day ceremonies.

They are being recognized for their participation in the Normandy and Provence Campaign during the Second World War.

Roland Moisan is one of the honourees.

“It’s not us that deserve the medal, it’s our friends who stayed over there,” Moisan said.

Remembrance Day is the time of year when Canadians remember the ultimate sacrifice made that affords us the freedom we enjoy today.

The ritual is bittersweet for Moisan.

“There are things I don’t want to remember,” Moisan said.

Moisan was on the shores of Normandy six days after D-Day, in the wake of the initial attack.

He travelled all over Europe; through Holland, France, Belgium, and Germany. Part of his job was repatriating prisoners of war.

“We brought them back to their home countries.”

Moisan returned from the war on Dec. 10, 1945. He was married 10 days later. He worked at Carnation for 40 years in Sherbrooke and raised five children with his wife.

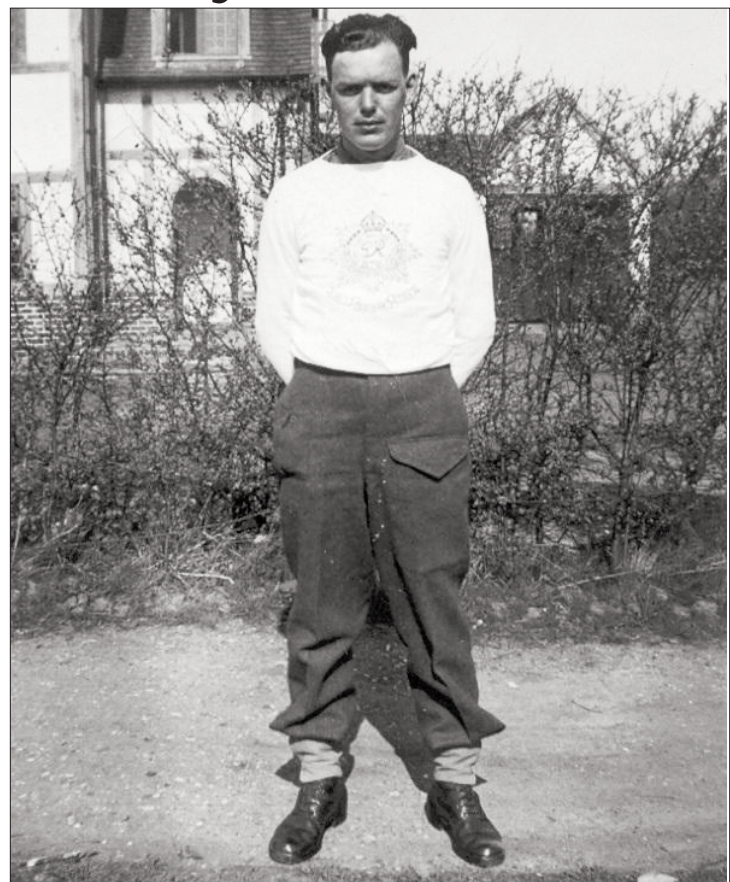
During that time, he did what he could to forget what he had seen and experienced and move forward with some semblance of a normal life.

Now, at 93 years old, so that future



MATTHEW MCCULLY

Roland Moisan, 93, is one of six local veterans who will be named Knights of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour on Sunday.



COURTESY

Moisan shown during training in Sussex, England. He said this was the picture “where his wife fell in love with me.”

generations can fully comprehend the gravity of his experiences, he is asked to remember.

“It’s not easy to talk about,” Moisan explained.

“When I was 17 years old, I knew I would need to go,” Moisan said, explaining that joining the army wasn’t optional at the time.

He enlisted voluntarily, and was sent

to the U.K. for training. Shortly after he arrived, his mother received Moisan’s draft letter in the mail.

Moisan was part of the Fourth Canadian Infantry Brigade.

When asked for his rank, he referred to himself simply as a soldier.

“I never wanted a title. I just wanted to stay with my friends.”

When the war ended, Moisan remained in Europe working for an additional six months, while many of his friends opted to re-enlist and head to Japan. They returned home and went to the United States for training, but the war ended before they were deployed, Moisan said.

Moisan’s most vivid memories about his time at war were about his interactions with families as his brigade moved through the countryside.

While waiting to move forward, Moisan and his comrades would help villages and families that had been

bombed out, helping them try to piece their lives back together before moving on.

Moisan remembered being stationed on the property of the Derloo family in the Flanders region of Belgium.

“I watched the baby one Sunday so the family could go to Mass,” he said.

“It’s hard to repeat everything,” Moisan said, explaining that when his brigade needed to clean up war-torn fields, there are images he would much rather never remember than speak about.

Moisan said his correspondence with his soon-to-be wife was a pleasant distraction.

“She would write two or three times a week,” Moisan said.

Before he returned from the war and married Patricia Paquette, just 10 days after his return, the two had only met on one previous occasion, when Moisan

CONT'D ON PAGE 3

## ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

**BRANCH #10**  
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*On Remembrance Day,  
let us salute those patriotic men and women  
who served the nation selflessly.*

**Galt Street East, Sherbrooke**

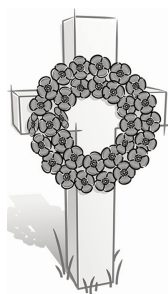


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Municipality of the Village of

**North Hatley**

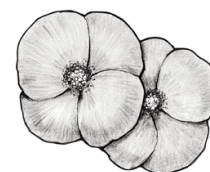
Mayor  
Michael Page

3125 Capelton Road,  
North Hatley 819 842-2754



*In Flanders Fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; And in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

John McCrae



# Remembrance Day services scheduled around the Townships

Record Staff

A number of Remembrance Day observances are scheduled throughout the Eastern Townships, starting this weekend, and continuing well into mid-November.

In Lennoxville, the annual Remembrance Day ceremony and parade will take place on Sunday, Nov. 8 at the cenotaph located at 150 Queen Street, beside Town Hall. The event, organized by Unit 318 of the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada, will start at noon.

In downtown Sherbrooke on Sunday, a Remembrance Day ceremony will take place at the St-Michel Cathedral, starting at 1:30 p.m., which will include six veterans being inducted into the French National Order of the Legion of Honour (see Page 2). The Sherbrooke Fusiliers, the Sherbrooke Hussards, the 52nd Field Ambulance, the 35 Signal Regiment, the Royal

Canadian Legion and the cadet corps will participate in the event, which will be followed by a parade to the cenotaph on King St. West. A wreath-laying will be held at the cenotaph at approximately 3 p.m.

In Hatley, a ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 7, starting at 11 a.m. at the cenotaph on the common. A ceremony will be held in Ayer's Cliff on Sunday, Nov. 8 at 11 a.m.

A parade and wreath-laying ceremony is scheduled for Waterloo on Sunday, Nov. 8, from 1-3 p.m. It will take place at the cenotaph, located at 5380 Foster Street.

On Wednesday, Nov. 11, Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 128 will honour veterans in Magog, starting at 11 a.m. at the cenotaph.

Ceremonies in Richmond will be held the following weekend, with a banquet on Saturday, Nov. 14 at 6 p.m., and a ceremony on Sunday, Nov. 15 at the cenotaph.



CLAUDIA VILLEMAIRE

Remembrance Day ceremonies, like this one in Danville last year, are scheduled throughout the region.

## Roland Moisan

CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

was six years old.

He met Patricia while visiting his grandparents in Cap-de-la-Madelaine. The two kept in touch, and the letters became more frequent when Moisan went abroad.

He sent Patricia a picture of himself while training in Sussex.

"That's the picture where my wife said she fell in love with me," he said.

Moisan said any letters he wrote were passed through a censor before being mailed. The photographs taken and the information shared were tightly controlled, he said.

Moisan was not able to hold on to Patricia's letters while abroad, because he was out in the rain and snow, sometimes sleeping in holes in the ground.

Patricia, on the other hand, kept everything. Moisan's daughter gathered all the letters and put them in a drawer for safekeeping, a record of one side of a love story.

Patricia passed away in February of this year. "It would have been our 70th anniversary this year," Moisan said.

Recently, Moisan was approached by his nephew. "Uncle, tell us about what happened over there," he said, pointing out the Moisan rarely talked about his experience in the war.

"He wouldn't know anything about it. My own kids wouldn't know," Moisan said, adding that he kept many of his memories to himself.

He eventually opened up and allowed his nephew to record his story.

Moisan is one of six veterans receiving the rank of Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour on Sunday in Sherbrooke.

The other honourees include Rodrique Berger of the Mount-Royal Fusiliers, Hercule Dupuis from the Maisonneuve Regiment, Ernest Viger of the RCC Anti-Tank, Georges Turgeon from the Royal Canadian Aviation Squadron 412 and Jean-Paul O'Reilley of the Third Anti-Tank Regiment.

The medal was also awarded to Pierre Dubuc and Jacques Nadeau at ceremonies earlier in the month, because they are not well enough to travel to Sherbrooke.

On Sunday, Nov. 8, starting at noon, a meet and



COURTESY

Moisan (right) with the Derloo family in the Flanders region of Belgium during the Second World War.

greet lunch for the Veterans will take place at the Buffet des Continents restaurant on Belvédère Street.

At 1:45 p.m., the medals ceremony will take place at the Saint-Michel Basilica cathedral.

A Remembrance Day Ceremony and wreath laying at the Cenotaph on King Street in Sherbrooke will follow at 3 p.m.

The Parade Commander and the Veterans will receive a troop salute at the corner of Wellington and Albert streets at around 4 p.m.

The Consul General of France in Montreal; Madam Catherine Feuillet will chair the medal ceremony and Brigadier-General Guy Chapdelaine, the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain will be responsible for the ecumenical cere-



COURTESY

Joseph Poisan (left), Maurice Rivard and Roland Moisan during the Second World War.

mony. At 4:15 p.m., the Veterans and the guests are invited for a vin d'honneur and the signature of the golden book at City Hall.

DEPUIS - 1945 -

**CLARKE & FILS LTEE**

"...in memory of those so brave"

58616

**2881 College St., LENNOXVILLE 819-562-9444**

# Armistice Day in Knowlton: Joan Barnes remembers

By Joan Windle Barnes

Our family participated in Armistice Day ceremonies, especially during the years when my grandfather was alive. (We interchanged the terms Armistice and Remembrance even though technically in 1931 it was legislated that Armistice Day was to become known as Remembrance Day.)

Sam Windle, my grandfather, was a First World War veteran, living in Knowlton, Que. We attended the activities at the cenotaph located in front of the high school and beside the old baseball diamond in Knowlton.

Poppies were pinned to our coats; they were elaborate with green centers that were quite realistic-looking. The pin at the back provided good security so rarely was a poppy lost from the lapel. When this did happen, there was a rush to replace it by November 11th be-

cause the poppy represented the blood of the fallen soldiers. It was declared a symbol of remembrance inspired by the poem written in 1915 by John McCrae, In Flanders Field, when he saw poppies growing on the graves of fallen soldiers in Flanders, Belgium.

In the early days when parades and ceremonies at cenotaphs were first beginning, Sam helped to organize things in Knowlton. The photos accompanying this article were among Sam's papers and would indicate the progression of what I believe to be one of the first Armistice Day parades in Knowlton, c.1921. (I suggest the year 1921 because looking closely, Sam and other men appear to be wearing a poppy on their left lapels. Poppies began to be distributed in Canada in 1921.)

There are no shadows in the photos - no sun. In other words, the day was typical of other November 11ths - cold and damp and miserable, conducive to mourning.

As a child I stood at the cenotaph in Knowlton with crowds of others. The most impressive part of the ceremonies were the powerful feelings I experienced while observing the two minutes of silence which began on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when all activities were suspended in order to remember.

The silence was so silent and so powerful I found it to be completely overwhelming. I occasionally would raise my bowed head and allow childish eyes to scan the faces of adults around me.

CONT'D ON PAGE 5



Getting organized to begin the parade. Taken in front of the old post office (now town hall) in Knowlton.



The parade went down England Hill and turned right onto the main street. This photo is taken in the vicinity of where Crandall's Garage once stood, near Maple Street.



The parade turned the corner from the main road onto Maple Street. Sam is on the right, beside the marchers.



## Lest We Forget

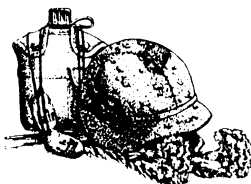
Bishop's University Alumni from World War I and World War II who died in Service for Canada

### World War I

- |                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| George Belford    | Forest Mitchell          |
| John Brown        | George Murray            |
| Frederic Crawford | Frederick McCrum         |
| Henry Dinning     | Charles Pope             |
| Thomas Eustace    | John Porter              |
| Angus Ford        | Lennox Robertson         |
| Edward Ireland    | Reginald Robinson        |
| Wilbur Ladd       | Harry H. Scott           |
| Louis Lemieux     | William Ward             |
| James Lobban      | Gerald Wilkinson         |
| Howard Millar     | James W. Williams        |
| Charles Mitchell  | Arthur Percival Williams |

### World War II

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Edward Ames        | Leslie McCaig   |
| Donald Bennett     | John Milne      |
| James Bilkey       | Bruce Munroe    |
| Edward Boothroyd   | Walter Page     |
| Ross Bradford      | Edward Parker   |
| David Budden       | Sherman Peabody |
| Douglas Carmichael | Henry Pibus     |
| John Carroll       | Kenneth Pyper   |
| Donald Chute       | Derrick Ridge   |
| Basil Doak         | Russell Rexford |
| Gordon Doak        | William Rogers  |
| Philip Duval       | Kenneth Simms   |
| Paul Ethier        | Gilbert Stairs  |
| Hugh Gall          | Trevor Stevens  |
| Henry Gray         | James Symington |
| Donald Jack        | Henry Trenholme |
| William King       | Ray Tulk        |
| Robin Lindsay      | Waldo Tulk      |
| Brian Lynn         | Arnold Woodside |
| Franklin Lyster    |                 |
| Gerald Mackay      |                 |
| Hugh Mackenzie     |                 |
| Vernon E. Mayhew   |                 |
| Archibald McKell   |                 |
| John Michaels      |                 |



57185



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# Ypres 1915

In the first week of April 1915, the Canadian troops were moved from their quiet sector to a bulge in the Allied line in front of the City of Ypres. This was the famed—or notorious—Ypres Salient, where the British and Allied line pushed into the German line in a concave bend. The Germans held the higher ground and were able to fire into the Allied trenches from the north, the south and the east. On the Canadian right were two British divisions, and on their left a French division, the 45th (Algerian).

Here on April 22, the Germans sought to remove the Salient by introducing a new weapon, poison gas. Following an intensive artillery bombardment, they released 160 tons of chlorine gas from cylinders dug into the forward edge of their trenches into a light northeast wind. As thick clouds of yellow-green chlorine drifted over their trenches the French defences crumbled, and the troops, completely bemused by this terrible weapon, died or broke and fled, leaving a gaping 6.5 kilometre hole in the Allied line. German troops pressed forward, threatening to sweep behind the Canadian trenches and put 50,000 Canadian and British troops in deadly jeopardy. Fortunately the Germans had planned only a limited offensive and, without adequate reserves,



VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

Ypres Reservoir Cemetery

were unable to exploit the gap the gas created. In any case their own troops, themselves without any adequate protection against gas, were highly suspicious of the new weapon. After advancing only 3.25 kilometres they stopped and dug in. All through the night the Canadian troops fought to close the gap. In addition they mounted a counter-attack to drive the enemy out of Kitchener's Wood, an oak plantation near St. Julien.

In the morning two more disastrous attacks were made against enemy positions. Little ground was gained and casualties were extremely heavy, but these attacks bought some precious time to close the flank.

The fierce battle of St. Julien lay ahead. On April 24, the Germans attacked in an attempt to obliterate the Salient once and for all. Another violent bombardment was followed by another gas attack in the same pattern as before. This time the target was the Canadian line. Here, through terrible fighting, withered with shrapnel and machine-gun fire, hampered by their issued Ross rifles which jammed, violently sick and gasping for air through soaked and muddy handkerchiefs, they held on until reinforcements arrived.

Thus, in their first major appearance on a European battlefield, the Canadians established a reputation as a formidable fighting force. Congratulatory messages were cabled to the Canadian Prime Minister. But the cost was high. In these 48 hours, 6,035 Canadians, one man in every three, became casualties of whom more than 2,000 died. They were heavy losses for Canada's little force whose men had been civilians only several months before—a grim forerunner of what was still to come.

Source: Veterans Affairs Canada

## The Battle of Ortona

*In the streets of Ortona  
Where a fierce battle brew  
For many day and many night  
This battle grew and grew*

*Both sides were losing  
Men plenty fast  
For there was no choosing  
Of who would be last*

*In the streets of Ortona  
Where many brave men die  
They're true sons of Canada  
In the hearts of you and I*

*These brave men have fallen  
But, they have not failed  
They answered their calling  
To a town so unveiled*

*They knew not each corner  
Or each corner stone  
They did their very best  
Each man held his own*

*In the town of Ortona  
Where we hear young children scream  
That is why we must beat  
Hitler and his dreams*

*From house to house and street to street  
They fought with all their might  
And soon to Jerry came defeat  
They left Ortona by night*

Written by Eric Trussler  
Italy December 1943

## Knowlton Armistice

CONT'D FROM PAGE 4

My grandfather's face was serious and sad. The cold wind caused his nose and eyes to drip and his face to become rugged red as he stood with his collar open, his shirt and tie visible under his coat. He wore a cloth cap.

He stood with other townspeople remembering his fallen comrades, the war that was to have ended all wars, and in later years, remembering the Second World War as well as others that followed.

Those early Remembrance Days left a lasting impression on me and to this day, wherever I am, I seldom miss the ceremonies on November 11th.



COURTESY JOAN BARNES

They then turned left from Maple onto Victoria Street. This picture was taken after the procession passed the Lake View Hotel on the left and is heading toward the High School. Sam is on the right beside the marching vets.

They gave their tomorrows...  
that we might have today.



58622

**We would like to salute  
all the veterans who  
gave their lives for us.**

**WE REMEMBER**

ville de  
**Cookshire-Eaton**



58621

# The Battle of the Atlantic

The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest continuous battle of the Second World War and one in which Canada played a central role. The battle began on the opening day of the war in September 1939 and ended almost six years later with Germany's surrender in May 1945.

## The Battle of the Atlantic

The Battle of the Atlantic was the struggle between the Allied and German forces for control of the Atlantic Ocean. The Allies needed to keep the vital flow of men and supplies going between North America and Europe, where they could be used in the fighting, while the Germans wanted to cut these supply lines. To do this, German submarines, called U-boats, and other warships prowled the Atlantic Ocean sinking Allied transport ships.

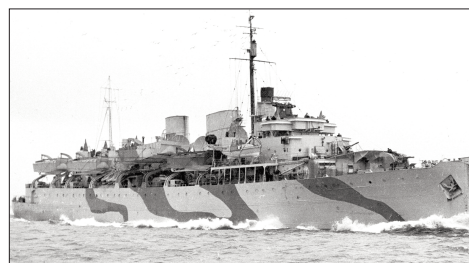
The Battle of the Atlantic brought the war to Canada's doorstep, with U-boats torpedoing ships within sight of Canada's East Coast and even in the St. Lawrence River. Canada's Merchant Navy, along with the Royal Canadian

Navy (RCN) and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), played a key role in the Allied efforts. East Coast cities soon found themselves involved in the battle, since Allied convoys (groups of ships that crossed the Atlantic together under the protection of naval escorts) were frequently leaving busy ports like Halifax and Sydney, Nova Scotia, and St. John's, Newfoundland, during the war.

## Challenges and Successes

Early in the war, German U-boats took a heavy toll on merchant shipping as the Allies struggled to find effective ways to combat the enemy threat. Between 1939 and 1942, the Germans increased the number of U-boats from 30 to 300 and developed effective hunting techniques like using groups of submarines, called wolfpacks, to attack convoys. Their efforts initially paid off, with 454,000 tonnes of shipping being lost to German U-boats in June 1941 alone. Their successes continued as nearly 400 Allied ships were sunk between January and July 1942, while only seven U-boats were lost. The situation was very serious for the Allies, as merchant ships were being sunk faster than they could be replaced, thereby putting the supply link between North America and Europe at great risk.

Technology played an important role in the Battle of the Atlantic. Aircraft were effective in protecting merchant ships, but the Allied planes used earlier in the war did not have enough range to



HMCS Prince Henry

Furthermore, Canada played an important role in directing Allied efforts in the Battle of the Atlantic. In 1943, Rear Admiral Leonard Murray was put in charge of the Allied air and naval forces in the Northwest Atlantic—the only theatre of war commanded by a Canadian during the conflict.

## Sacrifices

Helping the Allies triumph in the Battle of the Atlantic came at a high price. More than 1,600 Merchant Navy personnel from Canada and Newfoundland were killed. Indeed, percentage-wise, their casualty rate was higher than those of any of Canada's fighting services during the Second World War—one out of every seven Merchant Navy sailors who served was killed or wounded.

The RCN and RCAF also paid a high toll in the Battle of the Atlantic. Most of the 2,000 RCN officers and men who died during the war were killed during the Battle of the Atlantic, as were 752 members of the RCAF. There were also civilian casualties. On October 14, 1942, 136 people died when the ferry SS Caribou was sunk as it crossed from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland.

## Legacy

Allied victory in the Second World War would not have been possible without victory at sea. It would require overcoming great odds, but the courage of the RCN, Merchant Navy and RCAF personnel helped keep the Allied convoys running and the supply lines to Europe open. These brave men and women were some of the more than one million Canadians who served in the cause of peace and freedom during the Second World War.

Source: Veterans Affairs Canada



LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

HMCS Swansea, January 1944.



VILLE DE RICHMOND

*The members of the Municipal Council of the Ville de Richmond recognize the sacrifices made by our brave soldiers in various conflicts and international wars they were involved in, and thank and honour them on this Remembrance Day.*

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Marc-André Martel, Mayor

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Céline Bourbeau  
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BRANCH #128  
AYER'S CLIFF, QC

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### CEREMONIES

#### MAGOG

Wednesday, November 11  
11 a.m.  
The Cenotaph

#### HATLEY

Saturday, November 7  
11 a.m.  
The Cenotaph on the Common

#### AYER'S CLIFF

Sunday, November 8  
11 a.m.  
The Monument  
Centre of the Village

57 165



## ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH #15

Richmond, Quebec  
(235 College St. North)

Marjorie Lancaster, President  
Remembrance Day Ceremony  
Sunday, November 15  
2 p.m. at the Cenotaph

Remembrance Day Banquet  
Saturday, November 14 at 6 p.m.

*We will remember them*

Call the Legion  
for Banquet tickets  
819 826-3444

# Canada remembers the Italian campaign

The Second World War began in 1939. Soon, much of Europe was under German control. In 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union and vicious fighting broke out on the Eastern Front. By 1943 the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, asked for help from the other Allied leaders to ease the pressure of this attack. The Allies agreed to help and decided to use Italy (which was aligned with Germany) as a platform to attack enemy territory in Europe and help divert German resources from the Eastern Front. This effort became known as the Italian Campaign.

The Italian Campaign was an important military effort for Canada during the war. More than 93,000 Canadians, along with their allies from Great Britain, France and the United States, played a vital role. As they pushed from the south to the north of Italy over a 20-month period, Canadians faced difficult battles against some of the German army's best troops. They fought in the dust and heat of summer, the snow and cold of winter, and the rain and mud of the spring and fall.

## Coming Ashore in Sicily

The Italian Campaign began with the Allied landings on the island of Sicily in the south of Italy. Canadian soldiers from the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade had an active and important role in this effort, codenamed Operation Husky.

It was a difficult task. Just getting men and equipment to the region was dangerous. Three ships carrying Canadian troops from Great Britain to Sicily for the attack were sunk by enemy submarines in early July 1943. Fifty-eight Canadians drowned and 500 vehicles and a number of guns were lost.

The operation began in the early morning of July 10, 1943 when Canadian and British troops came ashore along a 60-kilometre stretch of coastline near Pachino at the southern tip of Sicily. The Americans who also attacked that morning covered another 60 kilometres of the Sicilian coast. The assault was one of the largest seaborne operations in military history, involving nearly 3,000 Allied ships and landing craft.

The fighting in Sicily would last more than four weeks for the Canadians who would battle through hundreds of kilometres of difficult mountainous country. More than 2,300 Canadians became casualties, almost 600 of which were fatal.

Taking Sicily was important. It helped secure the Mediterranean Sea for Allied shipping and contributed to the downfall of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. The new Italian government surrendered to the Allies; however, the Germans were not prepared to lose Italy and seized control. The fall of Sicily cleared the way for the Allies' next step: landing in mainland Italy.

## Liberating Mainland Italy

The Allies came ashore in mainland Italy on September 3, 1943. After losing Sicily, however, Germany was determined to hold the Italian mainland. To slow the Allied advance, the Germans took advantage of the mountainous landscape and turned the length of the Italian peninsula into a series of defensive positions which stretched from the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Adriatic Sea. These defensive lines were well protected with machine gun nests, barbed wire, land mines, and artillery positions.

Canadians joined other Allied troops in what amounted to a painstaking crawl up the Italian mainland over poor roads and through challenging weather. One of the most difficult battles for the Canadian troops was the Battle of Ortona during the Christmas of 1943. Ortona was an ancient town of castles and stone buildings located on a ledge overlooking the Adriatic Sea. Its narrow, rub-

ble-filled streets limited the use of tanks and artillery. This meant the Canadians had to engage in vicious street fighting and smash their way through walls and buildings—"mouseholing", as it was called. The Canadians liberated the town on December 28 after more than a week of struggle.

Fighting in the Italian Campaign continued as the Allies made their way north through many German defensive positions. Notable for Canada was the Battle in the Liri Valley, with the ensuing liberation of Rome by the American army on June 4, 1944. In the late summer and fall of 1944, the Allies broke through Germany's "Gothic Line" in the north. Fighting continued into the spring of 1945 when the Germans finally surrendered. Canadian troops, however, did not participate in the final victory of the campaign. By February 1945, they had been transferred to Northwest Europe to be reunited with the First Canadian Army. There they

joined the Allied advance into the Netherlands and Germany to help finally end the war in Europe.

## Sacrifice

Canadian casualties in the Italian Campaign totalled more than 26,000, nearly 6,000 of which were fatal. Most of the Canadians who died in Italy are buried in the many Commonwealth war cemeteries there, or are commemorated on the Cassino Memorial, located in the Cassino War Cemetery south of Rome.

The brave Canadians who fought in Italy were among the more than one million Canadians who served during the Second World War. Coming from all walks of life, these Canadians accomplished much and sacrificed greatly in the fight for the rights and freedoms of others.

Source: Veterans Affairs Canada



LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

Cassino, Italy. May 1944.



LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

1st Canadian Division in action, Italy, December 1943.



*Cass*  
Funeral Homes

Honoring  
those who  
gave their lives



*When You Go Home,  
Tell Them Of Us And Say,  
"For Your Tomorrow,  
We Gave Our Today"*



**Remembrance Day Parade  
and Ceremony  
Sunday, November 8, 2015  
starts at noon  
Gather by the Cenotaph  
in Lennoxville**

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!**

**ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE Unit #318  
"The Hut"  
300 St. Francis Street, Sherbrooke  
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# Canadian war brides

The term "war bride" refers to the estimated 48,000 young women who met and married Canadian servicemen during the Second World War. These war brides were mostly from Britain, but a few thousand were also from other areas of Europe: the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy and Germany.

War brides also came to Canada after the First World War. The official Government of Canada history of the First World War reports that an estimated 54,000 relatives accompanied the returning troops following demobilization.

We salute this remarkable group of Canadian citizens who, for love, followed their husbands. Where their returning Veterans went, these young women followed and made their new homes in their young and growing land. These women were welcomed to their new communities and new families. The contributions of these new Canadians would soon extend far beyond the walls of their homes as they entered into the life of their communities and enriched it with their many abilities and hard work. The years following the Second World War were ones of unprecedented change for Canada and our country's war brides have played an important part in the growth and development of the free and peaceful Canada that we enjoy today.

Many Canadian families and communities count themselves the richer for the contributions of the thousands of war brides, both of the First and the Second World War, who have made Canada their home.

## Canadian Servicemen in Wartime Britain

From 1939 to 1945, hundreds of thousands of Canadian servicemen were stationed in Britain, some for as long as four years. They worked and trained while the Allied Command prepared for the final assault on occupied Europe.

As in the First World War, those who were injured during the fighting in Europe and those who had earned occasional periods of leave also spent time in Britain. As a result, Canadian servicemen and women were living in areas throughout the United Kingdom. Chance encounters, local social events and dances ensured that Canadian servicemen met the young women in nearby cities, towns and villages all over the United Kingdom. Inevitably, many fell in love. Although some war brides describe whirlwind romances, others had known their Canadian servicemen fiancés for one, two, even three years before deciding to marry.

Those Canadian servicemen wanting to marry overseas faced difficulties. Permission from the commanding officer was required and parents were sometimes opposed: they foresaw that a marriage to a Canadian serviceman would probably result in loss and separation from their daughters as most war brides would emigrate to Canada. In the 1940s, before transatlantic commercial air travel, this was a journey that few families could afford.

Despite it all, love found a way. Young people, used to the hardships of war, saw few good reasons to wait. Many young women in Britain had already faced nightly bombing raids, the deaths of family members or friends, blackouts and rationing. For the young Canadian servicemen, the order to ship out to battle on a moment's notice was expected daily. Life was for living, and the future, uncertain.

Despite an official army policy discouraging these marriages, the army and other branches of the Canadian military, faced with the inevitable, made arrangements to assist the newlyweds and their young families.

Family and friends helped the couples with precious gifts of ration books. These were needed to buy wedding clothes. Even acquiring enough food for a

simple wedding reception was a challenge because just about everything was in short supply. Nevertheless, wedding photos from the period show joyful faces, uniformed young men, flowers, and simple wedding gowns. It was a tradition among brides at that time to carry silver horseshoes, made from paper, for luck.

## The Canadian Wives' Bureau in London

As the number of war brides grew, the Canadian Government established the Canadian Wives' Bureau, whose job it was to assist the wives of Canadian servicemen and their children, and to make arrangements for those who wished to eventually join their husbands in Canada. The first Canadian Wives' Bureau offices were on Regent Street in the heart of central London and it was here the war brides applied to emigrate to Canada. The Wives' Bureau also tried to help with the transition from one country to the other. It encouraged the formation of Canadian Wives' Clubs, published information on living in Canada and even a Canadian cookbook.

## Saying 'Goodbye'

Since some Canadian servicemen had lived in Britain from 1939 to 1943 or 1944, their young families had all but forgotten that, in time, they would be leaving. Many war brides describe receiving just a few days notice before it was time to sail for Canada. There were often heart-wrenching scenes as young women said goodbye to their families.

Some war brides describe their voyage to Canada as a great and wonderful adventure. They made friends, feasted on the plentiful supply of food onboard ship, and did what they could to help out those with small children.

Others described themselves as homesick, heartsick and seasick. Some of the crossings to Canada took place during the winter. Travelling with crying children, enduring seasickness, and dealing with the shock of leaving home often did not make the trip an easy one—even on a converted luxury liner.

## Crossing the Atlantic

Between 1942 and 1947, most of the 48,000 young women who had married Canadian servicemen, and their 22,000 children, were brought to Canada. A few Canadian servicewomen married British husbands. These men were also eligible to travel to Canada, and had to put up with a bit of good-humoured teasing about being "male war brides".

In 1942 and 1943, some war brides travelled on board ships that were in real danger from enemy U-boats in the North Atlantic.

The majority, however, came to Canada in 1946, after the war had ended and the troops had been returned home. As life returned to peacetime pursuits, the Canadian Government turned its attention to welcoming this unique group of new Canadians. War brides were transported on huge troop ships especially outfitted for their use, and converted luxury liners.

The most notable of these was the Queen Mary. War brides remember hanging their diapers in the pool area, and sharing the ship with nearly 1,000 other war brides and their children. Red Cross Escorts did their best to ensure that everyone was taken care of and earned unreserved praise from grateful war brides. Despite everyone's best efforts, many were exhausted and worried about sick children by the time they landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

## Pier 21, Halifax, N.S.

Like immigrants before and after them, almost all war brides vividly remember docking in Halifax, and passing through Pier 21. They were met there by Red Cross and Salvation Army volunteers, who offered the new Canadians a warm welcome and gifts of food and clothes for the children. From 1928 until 1971, Pier 21 was Canada's front door to over a million immigrants, wartime evacuees, refugees, troops, war brides and their children. Pier 21, a National Historic Site, currently houses an exhibition chronicling the pier's role in sending off the military overseas, and welcoming them, their war brides, and other new Canadians, home. From the Veterans' Deck at the pier, visitors can look out across the mouth of the Harbour and see where the large cables making up nets were strung every evening during the Second World War to prevent enemy submarines from entering

## The War Bride Trains

Brides and their children were assisted to special war bride trains bound for various points across Canada. Husbands and families were notified of arrival times. Many brides marvelled at the vastness of their new land. For some, the journey to the Prairies and to the West Coast took several days, and seemed almost never ending.

## A New Life in a New Land

For the most part, war brides were met by eager husbands and warm receptions from in-laws. There were wedding and baby showers from welcoming communities. For a not-so-fortunate few, there were disappointments. The government had only undertaken to pay travel fares one way—so an unwelcomed or unhappy war bride with no means of returning to her family faced a precarious situation. Eventually, they found help, from the Red Cross, sympathetic neighbours or communities, and managed to return to their families in Britain.

For many war brides, coming as they did from British or European cities, rural life in Canada was not what they had expected. In the 1940s, many Canadians lived in rural areas where most homes had no electricity, and even fewer had indoor plumbing. There are amusing stories told about terrified war brides trying to face down their first milk cow. Others settled in French-speaking communities. Learning a new language and settling into a new culture became part of their new lives.

Most war brides now speak nostalgically of the country of their birth, but for them Canada is home. Many years have passed since they bravely chose Canada as their new home. Their husbands, their children, and their grandchildren are here.

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