

THE
BEECHWOOD WAY

MAGAZINE

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WAYS**

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IN WWI**

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FOR EVERMORE: THE
CANADIAN AGENCY OF
THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
COMMISSION**

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- AFTERMATH
by Erika Wagner



Letter from the editor

This summer has flown by; the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation has had one of the busiest years for events on record. We have introduced our beautiful and historic grounds to thousands of people from across Ottawa and the country.

“Oh... This is in Ottawa, what an incredible place!” said one person, while another “I can’t believe this is in my city!” or “What a hidden gem! You would have never guessed from the road”. Statements like these are what we love to hear. The staff work so hard to make Beechwood the special place it is, they have a dedication and pride in what they do.

We have held several very interesting events such as the first event movie in the cemetery. We collaborated with Capital Pop-Up Cinema, and played the 1985 classic *Back to the Future*. The event was a success as 1300 people came out and watched this iconic movie as a community.

We followed up the next day with our Annual Historical Tour - themed *Back to the Future* – where we discovered a Hollywood early film star Rockcliffe St. Patrick Fellowes, the first Canadian-born woman mountaineer Henrietta Loetitia Tuz Wilson, and a founding author and critic of African-Canadian literature Lorris Elliott, to name but half of the featured people. Ottawa has embraced this event with a large crowd of nearly 800 people.

We are also fortunate to have had many private tours with large groups ranging from Toronto based high school students, to the Canada School of Public Service, to the Ottawa Garden Club and the Connaught Military Training Centre. It was an incredible season for us!

Now as we look forward to this issue, we have chosen to focus on the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War 1 and the sacrifice of the citizen-soldiers. You will find a few interesting articles from guest authors about this sacrifice and the importance of remembering, commemorating and honouring our men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces.

As always, I hope to see you at future events and most importantly I hope you enjoy this issue.

-Nicolas McCarthy, Director of Marketing, Communications and Community Outreach



Executive Director: Andrew Roy; Editor-in-Chief: Nicolas McCarthy; Editor: Jacques Faille; Design Editor: Erika Wagner; French translation: Jean-Luc Malherbe; Contributors: Nicolas McCarthy, J. J. Healy, Dominique Boulais, Carl Mills and Erika Wagner

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How to contact us: E-mail: foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca Phone: (613) 741-9530 Mail: 280 Beechwood Ave, Ottawa ON K1L 8A6

Visit us online to learn more about Beechwood, the National Cemetery of Canada and read back issues of at: www.beechwoodottawa.ca.

We want your feedback on how we are doing! Contact Erika Wagner at foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca

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COMMEMORATION THREE WAYS

by *Nicolas McCarthy, Director of Marketing, Communication and Community Outreach*



The First World War holds a very special place in our collective hearts. It became a coming of age for Canada, with victories such as Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele and the Last Hundred Days campaign, leading to the end of the war and Armistice.

These victories came at great personal cost to the country and its citizens. Some 619,636 Canadians enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the war, and approximately 424,000 served overseas. Close to 61,000 Canadians were killed, and another 172,000 were wounded.

The Beechwood's centenary commemoration of the war's end has been unfolding for more than three years, starting with the planting of English oaks from the Vimy Oak Legacy Corporation. These special acorns originally gathered by Leslie Miller after the Battle of Vimy Ridge, were planted on farmland in Scarborough, ON until they were moved to Beechwood.

100th anniversary of the end of the First World War is this year. Beechwood chose to commemorate in three ways:

There But Not There

Beechwood Cemetery collaborated with the There But Not There campaign, to bring Tommy silhouettes, an aluminum outline of a First World War soldier, to Canada. These six-foot tall Tommy figures have been standing sentry in different areas of the cemetery, honouring soldiers buried at Beechwood and around the world.

The journey of the Tommies within the cemetery began at Sir Robert Borden's grave on July 9, 2018. They have been moved, approximately 10 to 15 feet per day at 11:00 a.m. each morning (the time of Armistice), highlighting important areas at Beechwood and some of the prominent people at rest on the peaceful grounds. On November 11, they will end their 100 plus-day journey in the veterans' section of the National Military Cemetery around the Cross of Sacrifice.

The World Remembers

The World Remembers looks to honour those who lost their lives in the 1914-1918 war. The program aims to remember all of the fallen, from both sides of the war. The World Remembers asks people to reflect on the humanity of each of the men and women who lost their lives during the war. The aims of this project are remembrance, education and reconciliation, to acknowledge the differences of history while honouring the equality of the dead.

Each night, between 8:00 PM and 7:30 AM in front of the Beechwood Mausoleum, the World Remembers 2018 display shows the names of more than 1,003,000 soldiers killed in 1918. These soldiers are from Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, South Africa, Ukraine, Slovenia, the United States, the Chinese Labour Corps and the former British Indian Army. 23,732 Canadian names will appear - more killed than in any year of any war in which Canada has participated.

To accommodate the more than one million names, the display will run sixty-one days, starting September 11th 2018 and ending November 11th.

100th Anniversary of Armistice Tree Carving

On the corner of the Veterans Section, stands a large and historic oak tree. This tree was at the end of its life cycle, ready to be cut down. However, as Beechwood has done in the past, we decided to give it a second chance and carve it into something beautiful. Beechwood resident wood carver, Peter Van Adrichem, started on September 12 and had been working for several weeks to complete it.

This Oak tree is a commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of Armistice. It has three maple leaves, each one representing a branch of the Canadian Armed Forces, fifty-eight poppies representing each a battle honour received by our forces during WW1 and a stack of Brodie helmets, the only head protection for our brave soldiers. This carving will stand tall for years, quietly reminding the cost and sacrifice of WW1.

Through these three commemoration, Beechwood Cemetery continues to bring much-needed attention to the commemoration of the end of the First World War. Lest we forget.



Throughout Beechwood Cemetery there are hundreds of military dedications on family monuments. Families memorialized their loved one that would be buried overseas.

THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL NORTH WEST MOUNTED POLICE (RNWMP) IN WWI

by Superintendent J. J. Healy, RCMP (R'td)

For many Canadians, it might come as a surprise to learn that the RCMP has a proud military heritage in national conflicts. Canada's national police force played important roles in the North-West Rebellion (1885), the South African War (1899-1902), the First World War (1914-1918) and the Second World War (1939-1945). In addition, the RCMP has been involved in United Nations Missions around the world. In all of these conflicts, the RCMP has served Canada honourably, but not without sacrifice. Hundreds of RCMP have been killed on the battlefield or were left physically and psychologically wounded long after their war experiences ended.

As our attention turns once more to Remembrance Day on November 11th, Canadians focus on men and women soldiers, their many sacrifices and the devastation of war. In this article some of the RNWMP (as it was called in those days) who went to WWI are identified, and a summary of their contributions are shared. For some Canadians, it may be surprising to realize that members of the RCMP are among our war dead and now rest in cemeteries all over the world.

Canada automatically entered WWI on August 4, 1914 when Great Britain declared war on Germany. There was an immediate response of men and women volunteers from across Canada who eagerly sought to participate in military service. Members of the RCNWP also felt this intense desire to volunteer for WWI, but their eagerness was met with resistance by the Canadian government. At the time, it was government policy to keep the RNWMP at home; its first obligation was homeland security and domestic police duties.

However, the urge of the battlefield was far too tempting for hundreds of RNWMP as compared with remaining at home performing so called regular police duties which seemed unfulfilling and boring. In light of Canada's announcement not to allow the RNWMP to serve in WWI and to get around this impasse, men simply abandoned the RNWMP in order to enlist and serve overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). Some of these brave patriots are described below.

Reg.#4174, Constable George Taylor Aitkin was killed in action in France on October 18, 1918. He was buried in the Drummond Cemetery, Raillencourt, France. Reg.#5613, Constable John Eyre Heaphy also left the RNWMP and enlisted with the CEF. He was also killed in France on April 7, 1918 and he was buried in the Mauberge-Centre Cemetery, France. Reg.#5545, Constable Frederick William Heath left the RNWMP in 1916 and enlisted with the CEF. He was killed on October 11, 1918 was buried in the Ramilles British Cemetery, France.

Other men 'purchased their discharge' out of the RNWMP in order to join the CEF. Reg.#5735, Corporal Stanley Edward Williams 'purchased his discharge' in 1916 so that he could serve overseas with a Saskatchewan Regiment. Williams was killed in action on September 2, 1918. His body was never recovered. Reg.#5501, Constable Reginald George Eland was killed in 1917. His body was never recovered. Both Williams' and Eland's names are among the 32 or so RNWMP names etched on Canada's National Vimy Memorial.



Photo credit: RNWMP 'B' Squadron armband worn at Vladivostok, Siberia (1919)

Reg.#4245, Staff Sergeant Robert Weld Ensor ‘purchased his discharge’ from the RNWMP in order to serve overseas with the CEF. Overseas, he attained the rank of Captain. Reg.#5549, Constable Ludovic Duhamel also ‘purchased his discharge’. He was KIA and his name is listed on the Menin Gate Memorial.

During the early years of WWI, the Force made strong protests to allow its members to fight overseas. The Canadian government finally relented and in April, 1918 the RNWMP was allowed to hire hundreds of recruits to build “A” Squadron which served with the Canadian Cavalry Brigade on the Western Front. “A” Squadron RNWMP, under the command of Superintendent George Leslie Jennings, saw action in France and Belgium and its members served as dispatch riders on the front lines. They performed “with distinction at the battle of Mons in 1918.” Other RNWMP Officers who also served with “A” Squadron included; Commissioner S. T. Wood, Assistant Commissioners Thomas Hill Irvine and Charles Deering LaNauze.

Many men lost their lives overseas. Reg.#6645, Constable Jared Fletcher Bodwell died of pneumonia on October 14, 1918. He was buried in the Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun, France. Reg.#6527, Constable William Toder was killed on September 13, 1918. He was buried in Vis en Artois Cemetery, France. Reg.#6359, Constable Louis LaCroix was killed on April 9, 1917. He was buried in the Nine Elms Military Cemetery, France.

Hundreds and hundreds of RNWMP went overseas. Many were killed and many are buried in foreign cemeteries. The number of casualties would likely have been much higher if the RNWMP had been allowed permission to engage in the CEF at the early outbreak of the war.

Reference

RCMP and military connections. <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/rcmp-and-military-connections>

THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE: THE CANADIAN AGENCY OF THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

The Canadian Agency of the Commission was established in April 1921 by the Imperial War Graves Commission, to commemorate the men and women who died during the First World War and were buried in North America and Siberia.

To be considered war dead one must have died during the designated war years in service or of causes attributable to service. The war years are considered to be 4 August 1914 to 31 August 1921 for the First World War and 3 September 1939 to 31 December 1947 for the Second World War.

The Commission’s work is guided by fundamental principles which were established in 1920.

1. Each of the dead should be commemorated individually by name either on a headstone over the grave or by an inscription on a memorial if the grave was unidentified.
2. The headstones and memorials should be permanent.
3. The headstones should be uniform.
4. There should be no distinction made on account of military or civil rank, race or creed.

The member governments decided to establish a policy of non-repatriation of human remains in order to respect the theme of common sacrifice and equal honour in death.

Today, the scope of work in the Americas includes the commemoration of over 20,400 War Dead in 3,400 cemeteries and on ten memorials. War Dead are commemorated in the Americas as a result of wounds sustained overseas, training accidents or illness. Over 14,000 War Dead in Canada are commemorated by a Commission headstone or a private marker in 2,810 cemeteries. In the case of the United States, over 1,000 War Dead are commemorated by a Commission headstone or a private marker in over 500 cemeteries; war graves are located in every state except Arkansas, Delaware and Nevada. Another 1,000 war graves are scattered throughout the

Caribbean, Central and South America and the Falkland Islands. The remaining 4,000 War Dead, whose remains were never found, are commemorated on one of five memorials in Canada.

Eleven cyclical inspection trips are completed annually by Agency staff throughout the Americas; each war grave is presently inspected once every six years. More frequent visits are conducted to larger cemeteries or to manage particular projects. The Agency's objectives are to evaluate the structural state of the headstones and memorials and their cleanliness. All resultant maintenance work is contracted to private companies.

The Commission is responsible for four cemeteries in the Americas which is defined by the fact it is actually the legal owner of these cemeteries located in Canada, the Bahamas, St. Lucia and the USA. The rest of the war graves are located in government, municipal, private or churchyard cemeteries across the continents. Many of the war graves are co-located with Veterans' graves in Fields of Honour.

The Canadian Agency is improving war graves plots in a manner similar to the Commission's cemeteries overseas where conditions permit it. Such horticultural and structural embellishment projects have been conducted in all four countries.

Vancouver Mountain View Cemetery

The Agency accepts contractual work outside its Charter tasks on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) for Veterans graves (those who served and survived the wars but were subsequently buried at the expense of Canada). From 2004 to 2010, it had been involved in a programme to locate, photograph and enter into a VAC data base all headstones of Veterans buried in Canada and to commence rudimentary maintenance where required.

In 2011, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between VAC and the CWGC to conduct a twelve-year cyclical inspection programme of Veterans' markers installed at the expense of Canada and to affect repairs of Veterans' graves where necessary.

Services Available to the Public

Any information regarding Commonwealth War Dead in North America can be received by contacting the following Commission office:

**Canadian Agency
Commonwealth War Graves Commission**
66 Slater Street, Suite 1412
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0P4 Canada
Tel: 613-992-3224 Fax: 613-995-0431
E-mail: enquiries@cwgc.org Website: www.cwgc.org

We hope you will continue to stand with us to remember the Fallen and all those who honour their memory. Their Name Liveth For Evermore.



82,000 STORIES TO SHARE – AFTERMATH

By Erika Wagner, Program and Fundraising Coordinator

In the wake of the tornado that hit the Ottawa area on September 21st, the small community of Dunrobin was directly in its destructive path. With winds reaching 265 km/h homes were destroyed and lives uprooted.

The Beechwood Cemetery grounds crew worked hard the next morning to clean up Beechwood. Once finished, they heard Dunrobin was looking for help from chain saw crews to clean up downed trees and debris. Since our crew was having a slow day and had the equipment, they decided to go and help. They checked in at the West Carleton Secondary School and were immediately assigned a house. They went to work removing downed trees and with the help of other volunteers finished just before lunch. Noticing down the road there was a small cemetery, they went to check it out. Once there they saw that two very large trees had fallen on top of some monuments and they knew this local cemetery needed their help. Having already done Beechwood that morning, the crew knew how to remove the trees without damaging any of the monuments. “The trees were massive. We saw no one had started working in this area, so we went ahead and did them,” said Rob Smith, Forman. The Beechwood grounds crew worked hard to clean up the area, but their reward was helping to restore the little cemetery back to its former glory.

