

THE

SUMMER 2024 • Vol. 29

BEECHWOOD

MAGAZINE

WAY



Photo taken by Michael Leveille

**Honouring the Legacy:
A Retrospective on the RCAF 100
Commemoration Ceremony**

By Nicolas McCarthy

**Honouring Honourable
Mauril Bélanger with
a Special Painting Unveiling**

By Stéphane Montpetit

**Recent Events at
Beechwood Cemetery**

**A Seat for Reflection —
Historical vs. Modern
Bench Monuments**

By Erika Wagner

Christmas Candlelight Event Vote



BEECHWOOD

Cemetery Foundation
Fondation du cimetière

Letter from the Editor

Could there be a more meaningful place to work in Ottawa than Beechwood? I do appreciate that I have a bias, however, with that bias I still think what we get to do day in and day out is meaningful and important.

We get to service the families and the community, we welcome people from all over the country to visit, we hold countless ceremonies and events that commemorate large and small moments in Canadian and World History. We recently honoured the contributions of the British Commonwealth Training Plan as part of the Royal Canadian Air Force's 100th anniversary with a tree and boulder tribute. Read more about this later in this issue, along with an overview of the events we held so far this year.

For the first time, Beechwood hosted a Death Café in the early spring, a second one in June and one more scheduled for the fall. And we are so proud of joining this global movement.

At a Death Café, people, often strangers, gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss death. A Death Café is a group-directed discussion of death with no agenda, objectives or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counselling session.

<https://deathcafe.com/what/>

The Death Café has really resonated in my mind. It was two completely unique discussions that provide a safe space to share personal stories, fears, concerns and all the assorted feelings and thoughts about dying and death.

I was struck by the positive reaction of an individual listening to someone else's story and how at that moment, in almost real time, a weight of guilt lifted off them. They felt validated in their emotions and held that they were allowed to feel this way too. It was wonderful. During the café, people shared, cried, laughed and left, I hope, feeling a little less afraid of dying and death, and a little more comforted leaving Beechwood than when they came in.

Beechwood Cemetery is lucky to have people who support our programming and everything we do. And we are always so appreciative of all the donors that help provide the funding for our programming. A big thank you to all of you.

I'm proud to say that after looking back at our 150th anniversary, Beechwood is aiming for the next 150 years to be filled with projects, service to community and giving back to our city and country.

My hope is that Beechwood is part of our collective Canadian identity and the thought of Beechwood brings pride to our country.

As always, we hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to seeing you soon.

Stay up to date with Beechwood by following us on social media.

- Facebook (@BeechwoodCemetery, @NMCBeechwood, @cimetiereBeechwood)
- Twitter (@BeechwoodOttawa)
- Instagram (@beechwoodcemetery)
- YouTube (Beechwood Cemetery)

Thank you,

Nick McCarthy

Director of Marketing, Communications and Community Outreach

Executive Director: Andrew Roy;
Editor-in-Chief: Nicolas McCarthy;
Editor: Erika Wagner;
French Translation and Proofed by
Re:word Content Co.
Contributors:
Nicolas McCarthy,
Erika Wagner and
Stéphane Montpetit

All photos taken on behalf of Beechwood Cemetery Foundation by Staff, Richard Lawrence Photography, and Nathan Pigeon Photography.

ISSN 2368-545X, 2368-5468

The Beechwood Way Magazine is a free, independent publication and, unless otherwise clearly stated, its articles imply no endorsement of any product or service. The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and will issue an income tax receipt for donations of \$20 or more. Registration number 88811 2018 RR0001.

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 at: www.beechwoodottawa.ca

We want your feedback on how we are doing!

Contact: Erika Wagner at
foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca

Publications Agreement number 42640528

Please return undeliverable Canadian addresses to The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation, 280 Beechwood Ave, Ottawa ON K1L 8A6.

The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation
- Board of Directors

Rebecca Murray, Chair; Dr. Alykhan Abdulla; Sophie Bainbridge; Gen (Ret' d) Maurice Baril; Clare Beckton; Stephen Bleeker; BGen (Ret' d) Cajo Brando; Col (Ret' d) Dr. Ronald A. Davidson; Christine Tausig Ford; Ian Guthrie; RCMP D/Commr. (Ret' d) Tim Killam; Louise L. Léger; Monica Olney; Richard Wagner; Robert White (Board Emeritus).



Honouring the Legacy: A Retrospective on the RCAF 100 Commemoration Ceremony

By Nicolas McCarthy, Director of Marketing, Communications and Community Outreach, Beechwood Cemetery

On a serene May 17, 2024, in Ottawa, at the National Military Cemetery, a poignant ceremony unfolded to mark a century of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). This event, rich with history and reverence, brought together representatives from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, each paying homage to the shared legacy of training and sacrifice during World War II. The commemoration was not only a reflection on the past but also a celebration of the enduring bonds forged in the skies above.



The Living Forest and Symbolic Boulders

Central to the commemoration was the unveiling of five boulders, each symbolizing the deep-rooted connections between the allied nations. These boulders were more than mere stones; they represented the spirits of those who trained and fought together. Accompanying these boulders were trees, planted to create a living forest, symbolizing growth, resilience, and the ever-present connection to nature.

- **The Canadian Shield Defender:** Originating from the rugged terrains of Canadian Forces Base Borden, this boulder embodied the valour and resilience of Canada's military heritage. It stood as a testament to the legacy of the RCAF and the pivotal role Canada played in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.
- **The Point Cook Protector:** From the historic RAAF Williams Point Cook in Victoria, Australia, this boulder symbolized the camaraderie between the Royal Australian Air Force and the RCAF. It honoured the shared journey of Australian pilots who trained in Canada, emphasizing the kinship and cooperation between the two nations.
- **The Wigram Boulder:** Hailing from Ōtautahi/Christchurch in New Zealand, this boulder represented the Royal New Zealand Air Force's (RNZAF) legacy. It retraced the journey of New Zealand pilots who trained as part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, embodying the shared sacrifices and unity among the allied forces.
- **The Prestwick Sentinel:** Originating from Glasgow Prestwick Airport in Scotland, this boulder symbolized the historic link between the Royal Air Force (RAF) and the RCAF. It traced the routes of RAF pilots who trained in Canada during World War II, representing the cooperation and solidarity between the RAF and RCAF.
- **The Congressional Boulder:** Born from the historic grounds of the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, DC, this boulder symbolized America's unwavering commitment to defend freedom and democracy through the skies. Hewn from the bedrock of American democracy, it stood as a silent witness to the valour and sacrifice of those who soared through the heavens in defense of liberty. It represented the spirit of American air superiority and the camaraderie of volunteers who joined the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, embodying the bonds of friendship forged in the fight for freedom.



A Ceremony of Reflection and Honour

The ceremony commenced with a warm welcome from the Master of Ceremonies (MC), followed by a Territorial Land Acknowledgement, setting a respectful tone for the events to follow. The sequence of the event was meticulously planned to ensure each moment honoured the historical significance and the personal sacrifices of those involved.

- Lieutenant-General Eric Kenny, RCAF Commander, opened with remarks on the significance of RCAF 100, highlighting the achievements and enduring legacy of the force over the past century.

Ambassadors and High Commissioners from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom then spoke, each reflecting on the sacrifices made by their countrymen who trained and fought alongside their Canadian counterparts.

Notable dignitaries included:

- His Excellency David L. Cohen, U.S. Ambassador to Canada
- His Excellency, The Honourable Scott Ryan, Australian High Commissioner
- Her Excellency, Cecile Hillyer, New Zealand High Commissioner
- Her Excellency, Susannah Goshko, British High Commissioner

Following these heartfelt speeches, Veteran and ANAVETS Honourary Dominion President of Gerald Wharton MVO, CD, recited John Gillespie Magee Jr.'s sonnet, "High Flight." This evocative poem, written by Magee during his time as a fighter pilot, captured the spirit of aviation and the ethereal connection between pilots and the skies they traverse.

Unveiling and Anthem Ceremonies

The MC then invited VIPs and the Defence Community to stand behind their respective boulders. Each boulder was unveiled in a solemn ceremony, with the national anthems of the United States, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Canada playing sequentially, underscoring the unity and shared heritage of these nations.

The event concluded with official photographs and a moment of reflection, allowing attendees to absorb the significance of the day's events. The formalities wrapped up, but the living forest and the symbolic boulders remained, standing as eternal guardians of the memories and sacrifices of those who served.



The Living Forest Arboreal Symbols of National Pride

To complement the boulders, individual trees were planted, each representing the national identity and historical significance of the participating countries:

- Canada's Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*): The Sugar Maple, closely associated with Canada's identity, was officially designated as the National Emblem of Canada in 1996. This tree symbolizes Canada's ecological and historical heritage, contributing to the nation's commercial development and serving as a symbol of national pride.
- United States' Chinkapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*): Prominent in eastern and central North America, the Chinkapin Oak was designated America's National Tree. It symbolizes the strength and resolve of American democracy and the nation's commitment to defending freedom.
- United Kingdom's English Oak (*Quercus robur*): The English Oak, deeply embedded in British culture and history, supports diverse ecosystems and symbolizes the country's resilience and continuity.
- Australia's Magnolia Stellata 'Royal Star': Known for its spectacular display of fragrant white flowers, this tree symbolizes Australia's natural beauty and the country's unique botanical heritage.
- New Zealand's *Picea Pungens* 'Baby Blue Eyes': This semi-dwarf variety of Colorado Spruce adds a unique charm to New Zealand's landscape, symbolizing the country's dedication to preserving its natural environment.

A Timeless Tribute

This commemoration was more than an event; it was a bridge connecting the past with the present and future. The living forest and the boulders will continue to tell the story of international cooperation, sacrifice, and the indomitable spirit of the air forces involved. As visitors walk through this hallowed space, they will be reminded of the bravery and unity that defined a pivotal era in world history, ensuring that the legacy of those who served is never forgotten.



Recent Events at Beechwood Cemetery

Beechwood Cemetery has been the backdrop for a series of poignant and commemorative events, each reflecting the rich tapestry of Canadian history and the diverse stories of its people. Here's a look back at some of the recent highlights:



Evening Honouring D-Day Veterans: 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landing

On May 13, 2024, Beechwood Cemetery held a moving ceremony to honour the veterans of D-Day on its 80th anniversary. The event, masterfully hosted by Robert Loken of Veterans Affairs Canada, was a testament to the bravery and sacrifice of those who took part in the historic landings. Attendees were immersed in stories of valour and remembrance, ensuring that the legacy of these heroes lives on.



As part of the RCMP Veterans' Association, Ottawa Division Annual Commemoration and Vigil on May 23, 2023, the RCMP National Memorial Cemetery Unveiled the following three plaques:

- **Unveiling of the RCMP Band Plaque** - In a tribute to the musical contributions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Band, Beechwood unveiled a commemorative plaque celebrating the band's storied history. The event highlighted the band's role in fostering national pride and cultural unity through music, and it brought together former band members and supporters to reflect on its legacy.
- **Honouring Commissioner Maurice John Nadon: Unveiling of a Commemorative Plaque** - A ceremony was held to honour Commissioner Maurice John Nadon, a distinguished figure in the history of the RCMP. The unveiling of his commemorative plaque served as a reminder of his significant contributions to law enforcement and his lasting impact on the RCMP and the Canadian community.
- **Honouring Women in Uniform: Commemorating 50 Years of Service** - In a heartfelt celebration, Beechwood Cemetery paid tribute to the women who have served in uniform over the past 50 years. This event recognized the dedication, resilience, and achievements of female service members across various branches of the military and law enforcement, acknowledging their vital role in shaping Canada's history.





Veterans Motorcycle National Remembrance Ceremony

On June 1st, 2024, at Beechwood Cemetery's National Military Cemetery, veterans and motorcycle enthusiasts gathered to honour Canada's fallen heroes. Over 100 veterans on motorcycles rode to Beechwood to honour their services and the fallen Canadian Armed Forces members.



BFO Ottawa Butterfly Memorial Event Recap

The Bereaved Families of Ontario (BFO) Ottawa held their Butterfly Memorial Event at Beechwood, offering a serene and supportive environment for families to remember loved ones. This event featured the symbolic release of butterflies, representing hope, transformation, and the enduring connection to those who have passed.



Honouring Heroes: A Day of Remembrance and Reflection

Beechwood hosted a day of remembrance and reflection dedicated to honouring all heroes, both military and civilian. This event provided a space for the community to come together to pay respects, share stories, and reflect on the sacrifices made by countless individuals in the pursuit of peace and freedom.

Spirit Bear Movie Premiere

Beechwood Cemetery hosted the premiere of the "Spirit Bear" movie, a film that sheds light on important social and environmental issues. The event brought together community members, filmmakers, and advocates to engage in meaningful discussions and celebrate the power of storytelling in driving change.

These events at Beechwood Cemetery underscore the institution's commitment to honouring the past, celebrating cultural and historical milestones, and providing a place for collective remembrance and reflection. Each ceremony and gathering not only commemorates significant figures and moments in Canadian history, but also fosters a sense of community and shared heritage.

A Seat for Reflection — Historical vs. Modern Bench Monuments

By Erika Wagner

Something as simple as a bench, an unassuming piece of furniture, plays a unique role in the tapestry of a cemetery, offering more than just a place to rest weary legs. It serves as a witness to stories untold, as a symbol of solace and contemplation amid the final resting places of the departed.

Benches scattered throughout these sacred grounds invite visitors to pause, to reflect, and to connect. They provide a physical space for the intangible act of remembrance — a moment to honour loved ones, ponder life's fleeting nature, or simply find solace in the stillness.

Each bench in a cemetery carries its own tale. Take the first bench in the cemetery; for example, that of William Wilfred Campbell. It bears weathered stone, and where one might see a crest or etching with names, these have been lost to time. This bench in particular was placed strategically beneath the sheltering branches of old trees, allowing those to sit and reflect on the life of William Wilfred Campbell.



William Wilfred Campbell
Section 22, Lot 41 NE
(1858-1918)

William Wilfred Campbell

William Wilfred Campbell was born in Kitchener (then Berlin), Canada West in 1858. His father was an Anglican clergyman charged with setting up “frontier” parishes in Canada West. As a result, the family moved around a great deal before they settled in Wiarton, Ontario, in 1871. Campbell attended school in nearby Owen Sound and was deeply impressed with the beauty of nature that surrounded him while living there.

*Campbell taught briefly in Wiarton, before attending the University of Toronto in 1880. Despite his deep passion for poetry, he followed in his father's footsteps and went on to attend UoT's seminary at Wycliffe College in 1882 and then the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1883. Campbell married in 1884 and was ordained the following year. He returned to Canada in 1888 to serve a parish in New Brunswick. Campbell's first two books of poetry were published while he was living there: *Snowflakes and Sunbeams* (1888) and *Lake Lyrics* (1889).*

However, around the same time Campbell began to struggle with doubts about both his faith and the suitability of his vocation; he resigned from the Ministry in 1891 and took a position with the civil service in Ottawa. Two years later, he received a permanent position with the Department of Militia and Defence, where he worked until 1909, when he transferred to the Dominion Archives.

*Living in Ottawa, Campbell continued writing and contributing to literary periodicals, and became immersed in the literary circles of the time. He met and befriended poet Archibald Lampman, and through him, Duncan Campbell Scott, and the three of them contributed to a literary essay and critique column in the *Toronto Globe* in the early 1890s, titled “At the Mermaid Inn.” Campbell's third book of poetry, *The Dread Voyage Poems*, was published in 1893 and, as the title indicates, was much darker than the first two. He contributed to and was elected to the Royal Society of Canada in 1894, and in 1899 published a fourth book of verse, titled *Beyond the Hills of Dream*. A versatile, passionate writer, Campbell also wrote romances and several tragedies: *Mordred and Hildebrand* in 1895, and a volume including these and two others titled *Poetical Tragedies* in 1908.*

*Campbell was most prolific in the early years of the twentieth century, during which he produced numerous pamphlets as well as five historical novels and three works of non-fiction. Only two of his novels were printed as standalone books: *Ian of the Orcades* was published in 1906 and *A Beautiful Rebel* in 1909. Another novel was published in *The Christian Guardian* but was never reprinted, and two more remain only in manuscript form. His non-fiction works included a book about the Great Lakes titled *The Beauty, History, Romance, and Mystery of the Canadian Lake Region*, first published in 1910, and reprinted and enlarged in 1914. The second was an account of the Scottish settlements in Eastern Canada: *The Scotsman in Canada*, published in 1911.*

*As a stalwart supporter of the British Empire, Campbell composed a song titled “An Empire's Greeting,” which was performed in 1902 at the Royal Botanical Gardens for Queen Alexandra. Another of Campbell's works, “The Crowning of the King,” was performed by an imperial choir at the coronation of King George V. As a result, Campbell was recognized in Britain and, in 1906, received an honorary LLD from Aberdeen University, and at the 1912 coronation was given the great honour of being invited to watch the Coronation Procession from a place in Buckingham Palace. In 1914, with the spectre of war hanging large, Campbell published a volume of very imperialistic verses, titled *Sagas of a Vaster Britain*. And in spite of the fact that he was too old to volunteer, Campbell was a zealous recruiter, and trained a number of men who subsequently fought in France. Campbell, one of Canada's most brilliant poets, passed away on 1 January 1918 at the age of 56.*



Prime Minister Mackenzie King admired Campbell so much that he instigated a movement to erect a memorial to the poet. It takes the form of a stone bench beside the grave, which lies in a corner of the lot. The bench once featured a bronze plaque, now missing, which had a portrait of William Campbell, and several lines from a poem were carved at one end. The bench is intended to give admirers of Campbell's poetry an opportunity to sit in serenity and reflect upon his work.

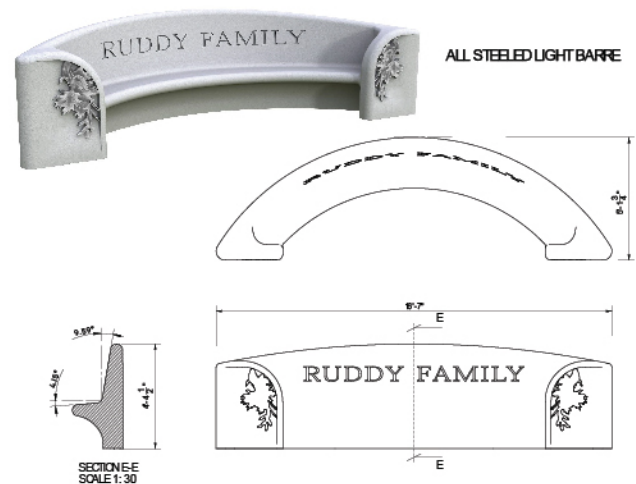
Art and Architecture

The design of cemetery benches varies widely, reflecting cultural traditions, artistic sensibilities, and the surrounding landscape. Some are intricately carved, evoking a sense of craftsmanship and dedication to honouring the departed. Others blend seamlessly into their natural surroundings, offering a peaceful retreat amidst carefully tended gardens and solemn monuments.

The modern equivalent of a remarkable bench is that of the Ruddy Family. Done by landscape architects Lees + Associates out of Vancouver, they were guided by John Ruddy, Executive Chairman of the Trinity Group. As a real estate developer and graduate architect, Ruddy wanted to build something that would stand the test of time and would leave something beautiful behind.

A personal feature is that Ruddy both designed the monument, braced the hill for stability that allows the monument to sit on the cliff's edge, as well as did the footings and foundation the monument rests on.

The reason behind the bench is more than just a space for quiet reflection, but a practical decision. Ruddy wanted a place to rest and sit with his loved ones. While there is yet to be anyone interred, this bench lines the road of Beechwood Cemetery, invoking a powerful reaction. In a world that seems ever-changing, cemeteries remain steadfast. The presence of benches within these hallowed grounds serves as a reminder of this constancy — a place where time slows down, where memories are preserved, and where the echoes of the past resonate in the present. They offer sanctuary to visitors seeking respite from the bustle of everyday life, inviting them to find comfort in the enduring legacy of those who came before.



Honouring Honourable Mauril Bélanger with a Special Painting Unveiling

By Stéphane Montpetit

Beechwood Cemetery, as Canada's National Cemetery, is often gifted prominent works of art. Recently, Beechwood was gifted a very special piece. Not only because of the significance of the painter, but also because of the personal connection. Allow me to paint the scene.

As a Funeral Director, an important step when meeting with families is to show them the Beechwood National Memorial Centre. Inside, one of my personal favourite spaces as a former Governor General Footguard, is the Hall of Colours. This space is reserved for former military members during funeral services. Located inside this historic room is a painting that once hung in Cartier Square Drill Hall. While on a tour with Bernard Poulin, I brought him into the Hall of Colours. Standing beneath the various regimental colours, I explained the importance of the painting by Emily Mary Bibbens Warren, titled "Canada's Tribute, The Great War 1914–1919 or Placing the Canadian Colours on Wolfe's Monument in Westminster Abbey."

The painting depicts a factual event as confirmed by Westminster Abbey's official website: Canada's tribute in the hall of colours, placing the colour on Wolfe's grave. In 1921, Miss Warren came to Canada to complete two very large canvasses that had been commissioned by Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden (who is buried at Beechwood) in London during the First World War. Shortly after her arrival in Canada, the National Gallery purchased her oil painting "Placing the Canadian Colours on Wolfe's Monument in Westminster Abbey," however the other canvas, entitled "Canada's Tribute" was not purchased by the Canadian government because of a change in the political climate. It was hung in the Royal Military College, Kingston, in 1947.

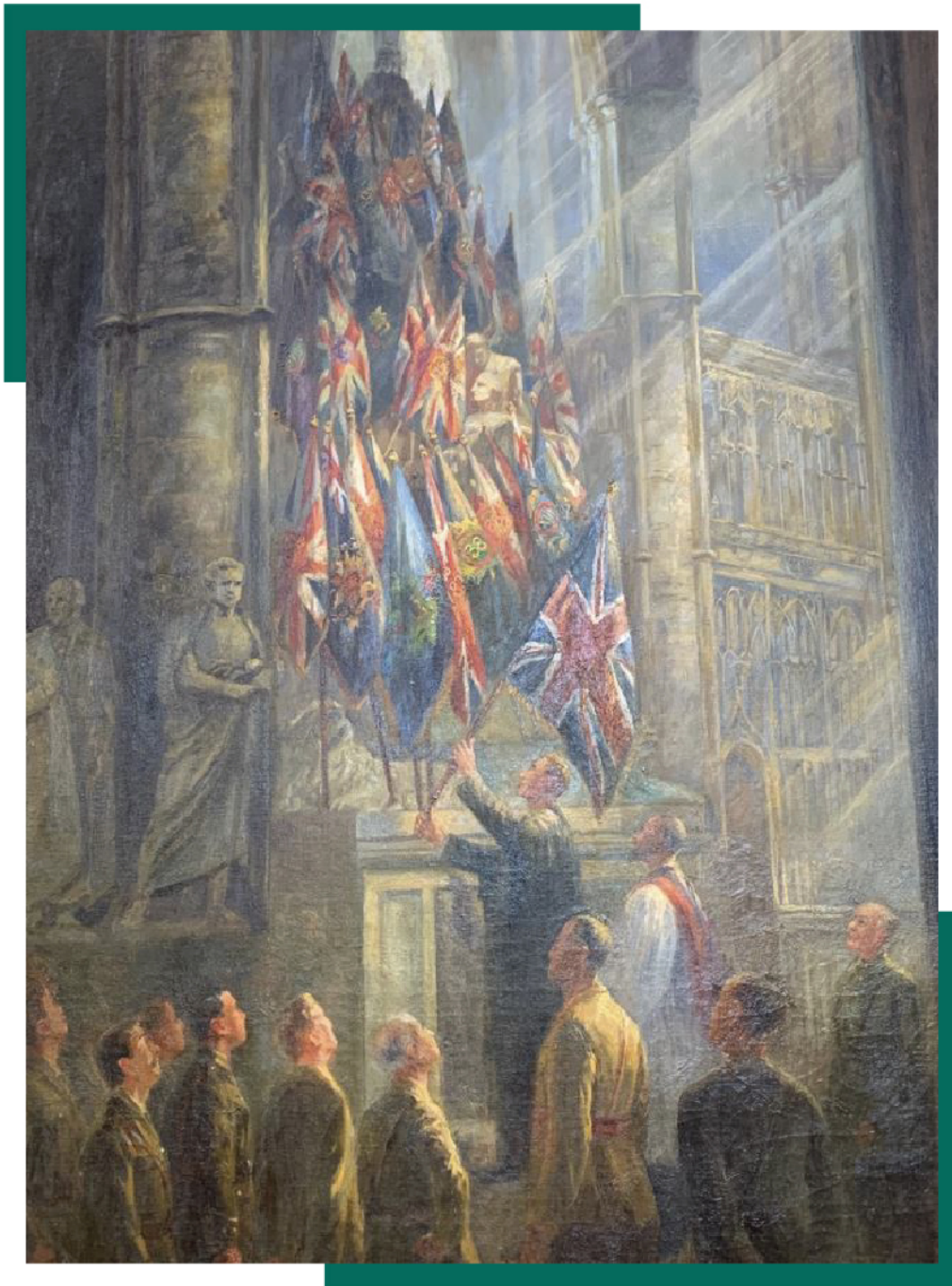


Although the painting located at the Cartier Square Drill Hall is not deemed to be one of Warren's originally commissioned works by Borden, it is a Warren original, an offspring of the Borden commissioned works. The painting located at Cartier Drill Hall is believed to have been commissioned by the Battalion, post-war circa 1921.

Bernard Poulin was fascinated with the story, as he is a painter. Best known for painting the Official Portrait of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien in 2010, he has painted numerous portraits that now hang in our governmental buildings and around the world.

A proud francophone, Poulin was moved when discovering the relationship with Beechwood and The Honourable Mauril Bélanger, who was not only the local MP of Vanier, but is also the reason Beechwood Cemetery is the National Cemetery of Canada.

Between the dedication shown by Beechwood to treasure and celebrate those who are interred through art, Poulin decided to donate his portrait of Mauril Bélanger to us. In a lovely ceremony, with speaker of the House of Commons The Honourable Greg Fergus and The Honourable Mona Fortier, MP for Ottawa-Vanier, the painting is now hung prominently in the building for all to see.



Beechwood Cemetery Foundation would like to thank The Honourable Marie-Paule Charette-Poulin and the artist Bernard Poulin for the donation of this portrait.



Time to Vote!

It has been 30 years since the 1st Christmas Candlelight Event here at Beechwood Cemetery. Since its beginning, there has been a short non-denominational service and Christmas carols.

Beechwood is wondering what you think of the event!

Do we keep the ceremony the same or make it just Christmas carols? Vote for your preference! This will impact the next 30 years of the Christmas Candlelight event!

Vote here:

