



Summer 2024

RCL The Liberation of the
Netherlands, Branch 005

Issue 2024-07

Dear Readers,

Thank you for reading our 2nd newsletter with many interesting stories and facts!

September and October are a very busy time for our Branch and we are present as much as possible at the upcoming commemorations and ceremonies.

September 1944. The liberation of the Netherlands began on September 12 in South Limburg. The village of Mesch, near Eijsden was first. In the border region near Valkenswaard, German troops withdrew. The Allies updated each other on the planned offensive through East Brabant.

Heavy air raids. In Zeeland and West Brabant, the war was fully audible, and sometimes visible. The 15th German Army was trapped on the (Zeeuws-) Flemish coast since the liberation of Antwerp on September 4th. Tens of thousands of soldiers had already crossed the Western Scheldt in anything that could be said. The Allied Air Force saw that and stepped up their attacks.

On September 12, there were more than 400 flights over the area. 190,000 kilos of bombs fell on enemy targets, such as the Sloedam and the Kreekrakdam. Allied pilots (including Dutch) bombed German troop transports around Bergen op Zoom and Woensdrecht. The most important connecting roads to the mainland were in that area. There were some civilian casualties.

At least 28 boats were sunk on the Western Scheldt, but a large part of the enemy troops escaped. The Allies increasingly realized that the German troops from Zeeland could move unhindered to North Brabant via the road near Woensdrecht, despite the bombardments (involving an army of about 90,000 men, more than 6,600 vehicles and 645 guns that ultimately escaped to join the battle that was heading towards Brabant.

The attack. The battle was also raging deeper inland, in Belgium. Field Marshal Montgomery traveled to the border town of Lommel, which was in Allied hands. There, he talked to his Corps Commander Horrocks about Operation Market Garden. He passed on the instructions of the upcoming offensive, which would then be passed to his units. Montgomery also ordered the Western Scheldt to Antwerp to be opened for supplies, but this had no direct consequence, yet.

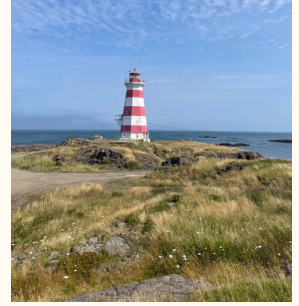
Night retreat. With the Allied threat increasing everywhere, the dug-in Germans in Belgium withdrew to a new line. Commander Model ordered his subordinate Reinhard in Moergestel to evacuate the lines to prevent encirclement.

When dusk came, they vanished into the night, abandoning the entire area between the Albert Canal, Maas Schelde Canal and Leopoldsburg.

The withdrawn German units set up new command posts, including in Valkenswaard and Luijksgeestel. This withdrawal was much more orderly than in the weeks before; a sign the Germans were recovering and becoming stronger. It would be a tough battle into the winter of 1944.
Omr Brabant.

The Editors

A trip to Nova Scotia



Travelling along the 7500 km coastline of Nova Scotia is, at least for us, really no punishment. This summer we had the opportunity to visit this Canadian province, which lies like a peninsula in the Atlantic Ocean, again after 7 years.



Slightly larger than the Netherlands and with a million inhabitants. Peace and space, harbours, lighthouses, fog, foghorns, inlets, whales, lobster, fish & chips and folklore.

At the end of our journey, in the Halifax region, we met with our RCL comrade Richard. Richard participated with our Colour Party on 4 and 5 May at Holten and in the parade in Wageningen. Richard introduced us to his RCL Calais Branch 162 in Lower Sackville and later that day he provided a tour on board HMCS Sackville in Halifax, the last corvette from the WWII, together with comrades Jim and Mark from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, who attended the commemorations in Bergen op Zoom in 2019 together with RCL Branch 005.



Beautiful encounters, memories, stories, new impressions and certainly reasons to come back.



Contribution by Wim Poppenk

RCAF 100th Anniversary Project- Park Benches

These amazing hand-crafted park benches will be installed at the Military Heritage Park in Barrie, Ontario, Canada in time for the upcoming air show on June 15, 2024. They are an RCAF 100th Anniversary project and steeped in Canadian WW II aviation history. Note the RCAF 100 logos are still due to be laser engraved on the metal.



The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan

The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) was a large-scale multinational military aircrew training program created by the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand during the Second World War.

In Canada, the plan's mandate was to train Allied aircrews for the Second World War, including pilots, navigators, bomb aimers, wireless operators, air gunners, and flight engineers. More than 130,000 crewmen and women were trained between 1939 and 1945! At the plan's peak, there were 107 schools and 184 ancillary units at 231 sites operating across Canada, staffed by 104,113 men and women and home to 10,906 aircraft.

As an aside, the Commonwealth Air Training Museum in Brandon Manitoba is well worth a visit! It is also home to the RCAF WW II Memorial – naming over 1,300 air crew who lost their lives in service.

My nephew, Captain Peter Musters, is a current Griffon Tactical Helicopter pilot for the RCAF stationed at a training facility in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, Canada. I headed out to see him for a visit and he said, “Hey! My friend owns a WW II BCATP base in Brandon; want to go see it?” Heck, yes, I did!

What struck me was this old aircraft hanger was built entirely of Douglas Fir wood, as metal was needed for war production. Beautiful! I could just imagine the buzz here 80 years ago as there would have been dozens of planes and hundreds of people. And this was just one of five such hangers on this base alone. Dozens of additional sites were scattered across Manitoba.



A fun little thing discovered against the wall was a parachute jump training rig.



The Anniversary Project Idea

The owner uses the airbase as a manufacturing location for his custom farm machinery. What to do with the beautiful old wood that he had collected from a burned down hanger? Park benches!

The old Douglas Fir was in fragile condition, so first had to be strengthened with infusions of resin. Then planed and sanded. For the benches themselves notice the legs are actually old aircraft engine parts – pistons and cylinders primarily. The frame is recovered aircraft aluminum, here are the benches under construction.



Where Can I See These?

Barrie, Ontario is about a 1 hour drive north from Toronto Pearson Airport, and is the gateway to our famed Ontario Cottage Country. While passing through, stop by the Military Heritage Park.

[Link to Map](#)

Editor's note: Kathie and her husband traveled to Europe in the Spring of 2023 to follow her father's path from England to the Netherlands. Comrades Berry and Yvonne acted as their guides for the North Eastern part of the trip. Kathie joined our branch during the trip and was officially installed while in Lochem.

Hugh Desmond Braden Military Life



Hugh Desmond Braden (Des) was born in the Red Cross Hospital in Pouce Coupe, BC on 12 June 1922. He grew up in the small northern community of Rolla, BC (northeast of Dawson Creek). He was the second oldest son of Clive and Sadie Braden. He was 7 years old when his father passed away and his mother was left with four children and minimal means of support. When Des was 15 his mother married her brother-in-law, Ross Braden who had served in WW1.

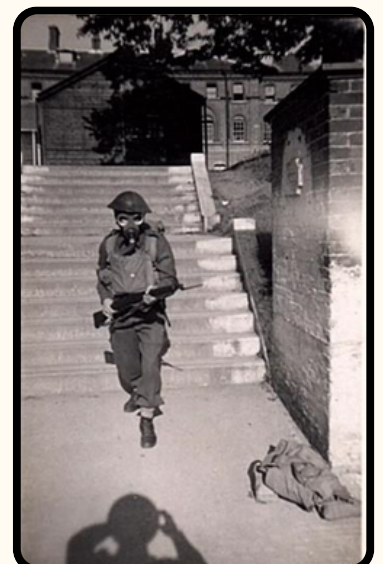
At the age of 20, in April 1943, Des following in his step-father's and elder brother's footsteps went to Grande Prairie to sign up for the Military. He thought this would be an opportunity to see the world. Other than a trip to Edmonton, Alberta with the Boy Scouts, Des had never been anywhere outside of the Peace Country.

He was placed in Basic Training in Edmonton, then sent to Camp Borden, Ontario for further training as a Driver/Motor Mechanic for the Army.

From Camp Borden, Des travelled to Debert, Nova Scotia, and then over to England, arriving on 19 September, 1943. He was assigned to XII Manitoba Dragoons - A Squadron - 1st Troop on 3 December, 1943 and was trained to drive a Staghound (F215064 - Rear Link Car) and a Scout Car (F70846 - Lance Corporal's Car #14 - L/Cpl Clarence McMullin).



Deagle, Des, Art Carney at Recruiting Office, Grande Prairie, AB



Various photos of Des at Camp Borden

Throughout the remainder of 1943 and early 1944, he was moved around England for training and preparing for transfer to France. On 8 and 9 July, 1944 all Squadrons of the 12th Manitoba Dragoons were moved via landing craft to Croix-Sur-Mer, France.

In July/August, the Dragoons were used as infantry as their Staghounds and Scout Cars, which were ideal for reconnaissance, were useless in the congested streets of Caen and other cities which had suffered from ground and aerial bombing, and were virtually unpassable due to collapsed buildings, crashed vehicles and bodies.

By mid-August, they and other allied forces had the Germans on the run through the Falaise Gap for which the Dragoons received battle honours. The goal had been to secure a port where they could bring in supplies and equipment, however, with the commanders focusing their efforts on the south of France and Operation Market Garden, the Germans had time to re-group and go on the offensive again toward the Scheldt.



Liberation of Veurne, Belgium
8 September 1944



Major Ken Farmer coming into Diksmuide 7 September 1944



By the end of October, the Dragoons were in Bergen Op Zoom and were recceing the Island of Tholen. They spent most of the winter of 1944/1945 along the Maas River and then the Waal River and by February 1945, the troops were relieved of this role. They were extremely pleased that the winter was soon to be at an end and more pleased that this role was to be given to some other unit.

From the war diaries this quote: *"Many months had been spent doing this type of job, often without the proper support to give the enemy measure for measure and more whenever he fired on us, but it has all been borne with equanimity."*



Des Braden in a Pixie Suit in Hoeven, NL
January 1947



Norm Petters, Hoeven, Breda Monastery -
January 1945. Now is the Conference
Centre
"Conferentiecentrum Bovendonk"

A story is related in the book, "XII Manitoba Dragoons, A Tribute," written by Bruce Tascona, that the regiment was back, holding various stretches of the Waal River.

"There was a bright note: with abundant choices of abandoned chickens and pigs which were consumed by members of the Regiment. A Trooper from A Squadron remembers the pig which was killed and consumed by his squadron as he remarks, "after going so long without fresh meat, we devoured this animal in no time flat, unfortunately, we did not age the pig properly and many in the Squadron fell ill to its effect. I believe this pig had the dubious distinction of nearly putting the Squadron out of action – more than any German could!"



Coevorden, NL 6 April 1945 - Des Braden at hospital, surrounded by nurses.



Coevorden, NL - Same spot where Kathie's father made the photo in front of hospital.

Bruce Tascona's book offered up another interesting story that included my Dad.

"While advancing towards Meppel, A Squadron was determined to cut off the enemy's escape routes. 1st Troop headed towards a farm where a "rumoured" group of 10-12 Germans were bivouacking. Upon their arrival, they discovered not a dozen but rather 50-60 Germans who confronted them. Believing that these were the same troops who had committed the previous day's atrocities, Lt. Haig ordered the troop to "let them have it!" Trooper Shiffman remembers the firefight well:

"My gunner, Bob Carson, opened fire with a .30 calibre immediately and sent the Germans scattering. Our driver, Tommy Taylor, backed the car up and made room for a quick retreat if it was needed. Our co-driver, Henry Drane was pouring continuous firepower with his .30 cal at anything that moved. There was so much noise that I couldn't hear the radio to know what the rest of the Troop was doing... Suddenly, the scout car driven by Del Buck Braden (Des Braden) flanked by, from our left to our right with Lance/Corp C. MacMullin firing all the way. He took out a German with a bazooka who was threatening our stag and then he took up a position on right to cover our flank. Lt. Haig remarked that it was a "gutsy" thing to do and that he was going to recommend MacMullin for a medal..... I hear two or three explosions which I knew to be bazooka rockets.

"The first sign that I had that something was wrong was when I noticed that there was something dripping from over my head. I got this funny feeling in my stomach and I was to look up imagining the worst. I slowly turned my head to sneak a glance at Lt. Haig. He was crouched down in his hatchway groping at the top of his head. Perched on his head was a clump of soggy and dripping dirty water!

Ammunition was soon running short before another troop arrived with all guns blazing as it entered the farm yard. Upon their arrival, Haig dismounted and ran to the nearest car to get more ammunition for his beleaguered troop. In ordinary times, it is a chore to lift one box of ammunition but Haig managed two boxes at a time, at the run and under fire! MacMullin and Haig would receive the Military Medal and the Military Cross.

Although wireless sets were intended for operational use and the transmission and receipt of orders and information, they were sometimes tuned in to the BBC. Troops gathered around such sets and heard the announcement that all German forces in NW Europe had surrendered to the British and Canadian forces of 21 Army Group and that the surrender was to become effective the following morning on 05 May 1945. By 26 May 1945, the order to escort the disarmed German Army to Germany was issued with over 40,000 prisoners being escorted into Germany and in the early days of June many more were processed through the Regiment."

A story from the "Lure of the South Peace." – Frank Golata, a Guide and Outfitter from Pouce Coupe, recalled guiding a German fellow, "Count Ledibou, a six foot six man, with whom Frank, on his short legs, found it hard to keep up." "In 1945, in Holland, when Des Braden was bringing up a group of German prisoners, he met the Count who told him of his experiences and asked to be remembered to Frank." My Dad says that making this connection with a German put a human face on someone he had viewed as the enemy up to that point, and made him realize that most were all just soldiers doing what their country asked of them.



Des' car at the last place they stayed in Germany (Cloppenburg) mid-May 1945



Leaving Leeuwarden, NL 17 May 1945

June 1945 - Aldeboarn, NL - Jerries on the march back to Germany - A Squadron, Support Troop displaying cod "S1" within A Squadron Symbol - Lieutenant's car.



In September 1945, Dad participated in a parade in Blankenbergen, Belgium which was held one year after the Dragoons had liberated this community. I was Googling, looking for something, and came across a Canadian Army Newsreel about this event. The video started with the men marching and right at the beginning and right in front was my Dad! I just about fell out of my chair. The hair was standing up on the back of my neck!



Des Braden, front left, in the Liberation Anniversary Parade in Blankenbergen, BE on 9 September 1945



"Do you recognize the old mug? Yes, it's me (Des). Don't get any ideas about the Sarg. He is married. This was taken in the N.A.A.F.I. in Blankenburge,. You can see one of the N.A.A.F.I. girls with her back to Sgt. Crone.

Sometime in February 1946, Dad was on his way back to Canada and was taken on strength in Calgary, AB. He received his discharge on 29 April 1946 and returned to the Peace River District of British Columbia and resumed civilian life.



A note from Kathie

After Bill and I visited Europe this spring to follow Dad's path across England, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, I realised how big an impact he and his fellow soldiers from 12th Manitoba Dragoons had on liberating Europe. It's been almost 80 years since Germany surrendered and the people of Europe still hold their liberators and their families in very high regard. We were treated like celebrities everywhere we went!

With war escalating in Eastern Europe again, it's more important than ever to remember that these people fought to protect our freedom and to bring peace to the world. It's our turn to protect the ideals they fought for.

Lest we forget!

Kate LaForge



Wreath for the 12th Manitoba Dragoons. 12 of them are buried in Holten.



On May 4, 2023, Kathie Braden LaForge was installed as a new member of Branch 005 by President Martin Reelick, who sadly passed away too early.



The impressive, beautiful Staghound of our friend Marco



Kathie and her husband Bill lay a wreath for the 12th Manitoba Dragoons. Bill is with the 4th Canadian Ranger Patrol group supporting the Canadian Army.



Kathie meets Veteran Jim Parks. Jim was assigned to the Royal Winnipeg Rifles



While exploring the Alsace region of France this summer, Maikel and I came across a monument to the Crew of the Halifax BIII MZ807 which had been shot down by flak during a bombing raid on Hagen, Germany.

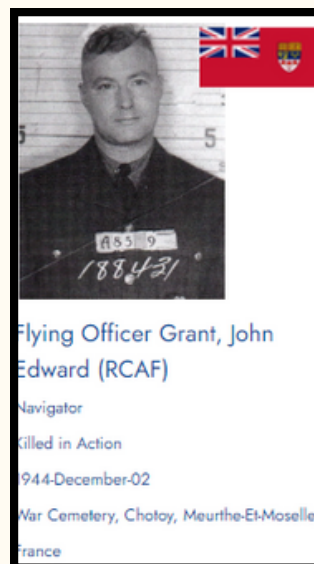


The monument can be found on the side of a steep, twisty road, coming off a mountain, and looked like it had been a while since it had visitors. Thank you to our friend, Angie Lorimer, who had seen something online and sent us in the right direction.

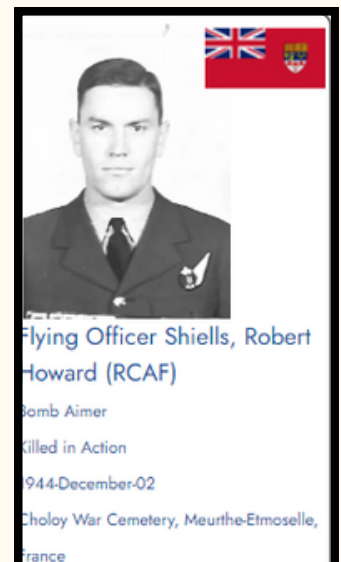
We left a poppy at the monument and paid our respects to the men, who are mentioned in this article.



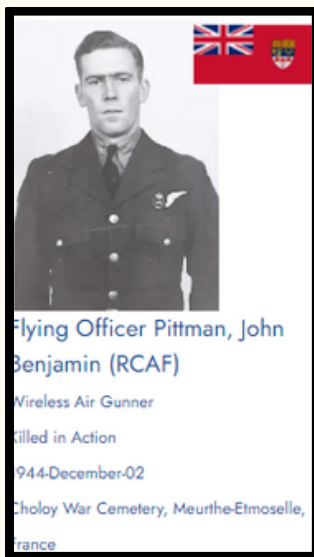
Pilot: Flight Lieutenant Walter Herbert Cook, J/11319 [killed]



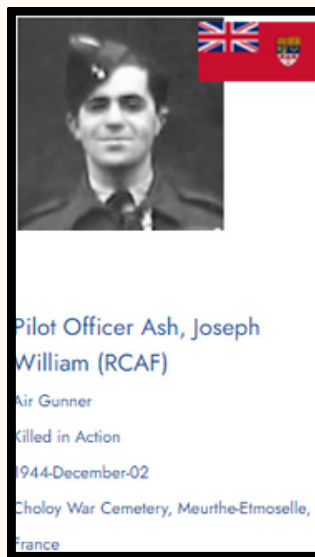
Navigator: Flying Officer John Edward Grant J/39333 [killed]



Bomb Aimer: Flying Officer Robert Howard Shiells J/38422 [killed]



Wireless Operator/ Air Gunner:
John Benjamin Pittman J/43279
[killed]



Rear Gunner: Pilot Officer
Joseph William Ash J/95203

As well as: (no photo available)

Flight Engineer: Richard Eric Ainsworth RAFVR
3011067 [killed]

Mid-Upper Gunner: Flight Sergeant Lorne A.
Mallory 265262 [who was injured and captured
as POW]

The Handle Page Halifax Mk III was operated by 433 (Porcupine) Sqn RCAF and was shot down over Wiler-sur-Thur, Freundstein, France after having taken off from RAF Skipton-on-Swale in Yorkshire.



Mr. Lorne Mallory, guest of honour at the unveiling of the monument to the crew of MZ807.

Surviving miraculously, but seriously burned, mid-upper gunner Lorne Albert Mallory was rescued and taken the next day by the owner of the farm-auberge (to the farm), then taken to Wiler-sur-Thur, where he was housed and cared for by several families despite the danger represented by the occupiers, continuously present since the start of December. After the liberation of the village on 8 December, the Canadian aviator was transported to the American hospital at Neuilly, then transferred a little later to England, before returning to Canada by ship at the end of February 1945.

"Corkscrew Charlie" was the code name of the Canadian Halifax bomber MZ-807 that took part at the start of December 1944 in the bombing mission in the Ruhr. Lorne Mallory was the sole survivor of the crash, and took part in the inauguration of a monument to the memory of his six comrades. This was to be, unfortunately, the last mission of the bomber. The operation aimed at destroying the industrial installations of the village of Hagen, a strategic node situated a little south of Essen and Dortmund, required the engagement of 504 planes, of which almost 180 consisted of Anglo-Canadian crews. For Halifax MZ-807 "Corkscrew Charlie," the flight begun at 17:00 from Skipton-on-Swale, between Leeds and Manchester, would not be followed by a return.

A desperate manoeuvre above the Riesenkopf, after dropping its bombs on the target, about 21:00, the plane made for the south, for reasons unknown. The most plausible reason is damage (to the aircraft) caused by German ground defenses or by a German night-fighter. In any event, the bomber headed towards Alsace, in the direction of territory already liberated from the Nazi occupiers. However, the damage (fire) to the plane could not be overcome, and the pilot of the plane attempted a desperate manoeuvre to land in the hills of Freundstein, at 925m altitude, and by some distance above the farm-Auberge.

The calendar records that, on 2 December at 23:00, the bomber struck the hill and tore itself apart in the forest. Of the seven crew members, six were lost in the fire that followed the crash.

The Crew, interred initially in a communal grave at the site, have rested since 1950 in a cemetery of the Royal Canadian Air Force at Choley, beside Toul, after having been interred provisionally at a military cemetery of the French forces.



Beautiful
surroundings in which
to be remembered.

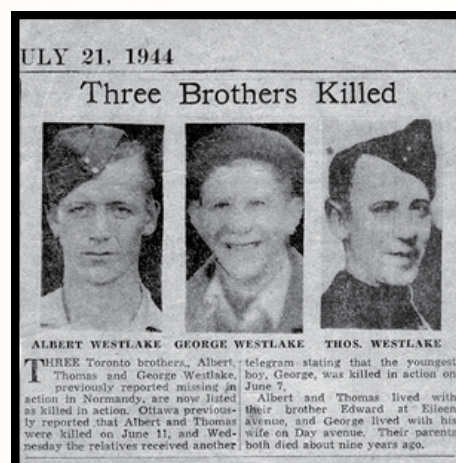


Lest We Forget

For Evermore Story of The Fallen



Rifleman Thomas Westlake, Rifleman Albert Westlake and Private George Westlake



Thomas, Albert and George Westlake were three sons of the Westlake family of York Township, Toronto, Canada. The Westlake brothers experienced a number of hardships during their childhoods, including losing their father in 1936, which meant that they formed extremely close bonds as brothers – even during their wartime service.

If you visit the D-Day landing beaches of Normandy, you might go to Beny-sur-Mer. It's a small village near the coast, not too far from Juno Beach, the sector where the Canadian soldiers of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division landed. One of the main objectives was to reach the airport of Carpiquet, (northwest of Caen). On their way, the Canadians fought German divisions and among them, the 12 SS Panzer Division led by Kurt Meyer. They are especially known for their brutality and fanaticism, many Canadian soldiers who had been made prisoners were executed by these young German soldiers.

The village of Beny-sur-Mer is special because of a Canadian military cemetery where there are 2,048 burials from WW2. The site is maintained by the CWGC (Commonwealth War Graves Commission). The soldiers buried here died fighting during the first weeks of the Normandy battle. Among them, three brothers from Toronto who gave their lives to free France and Europe.

Private George Westlake who fought with the North Nova Scotia Highlanders died June 7, 1944 during the battle for Authie, he was 23. His brigade was in position in that village but in a precarious position. Due to the haste of the advance, their left flank was unprotected. The Germans counterattacked on that open flank, surrounded and overwhelmed the Canadians with the tanks and troops of the 12th SS (Hitler Youth) Panzer Division. George Westlake died in an orchard after he fought his first battle. For this fight, the number of casualties is very high: 84 killed, 158 wounded, and 128 lost as prisoners of war.

His two brothers, Thomas and Albert, died June 11, 1944, in the town of Mesnil-Patry serving in the Queen's Own Rifles Regiment. They were found in each other's arms. The attack on the village was made without previous reconnaissance or artillery preparation, despite the numerous enemies. The Canadian tanks attacked through open fields, but were easy targets and suffered many casualties for that reason. An eyewitness said that "Tommy and Ab" were sharing a gun and fought together until the end after "doing a damn good job." The regiment suffered 96 casualties that day, 55 of whom were killed.

Today, their stories are well-known thanks to the work of their nephew, Gary Westlake, whose mission was to work for Memory. A park in the city of Toronto is named after them and their sacrifice will be remembered. An association named "The Westlake Brother's Souvenir" was created in 2006 in Normandy thanks to a group of high school teachers and students and many ceremonies were organized by them to thank our liberators.

Donation from NavCan to Branch 005

On Friday, July 19th Gavin van Kuppenveld from Canada finally visited Mondani again. Due to the Corona period, he had not been able to visit sooner. Gavin works as an Air Traffic Controller at Nav Canada (NavCan).

In 1996, Canada became the first country in the world to privatize its air navigation services. Today, NavCan is still one of the few private companies that is fully responsible for air traffic control, flight information and other aviation services. They play a unique and crucial role in managing the 18 million square kilometers of Canadian civil airspace and the North Atlantic airspace under Canadian control, one of the largest airspace regions in the world. It is internationally recognized for its safety record, service excellence, and technological innovation, and is a proud partner of the global air transport industry.

Gavin did not come without reason, and once again made a donation to RCL Branch 005. NavCan provided the Branch with an electronic donation of and during his visit, Gavin provided another donation specifically for the Indigenous Legacy project and Faces to Graves.

Gavin was in the Netherlands with his wife Nicole and their family for a number of appointments, and of course a visit to the Clubhouse RCL 005 could not be missed. The last time he visited the Legion was before the pandemic, when they came with a whole team from NavCan and also made a donation.

From Gavin:

"I'm glad you received our company donation and I'm sure you will put the funds to good use in your mission to commemorate and honour the fallen soldiers as well as educate future generations."

Our President presented Gavin and NavCan with a certificate of thanks and a shield from Branch 005 as a thank you for these very generous gifts!

Thank you Nav Canada!



4Days Marches - Nijmegen 2024

The 4Days Marches are always held in the third week of July and are the largest walking event in the world! More than 45,000 participants, with more than 70 different nationalities, from ages 11 to 90+ come to Nijmegen every year to walk 30, 40, or 50 kilometers a day for four days in the Waal city and its beautiful, wooded surroundings. The walkers all share the same goal: the coveted 4Days Marches Cross.

Of course , Branch 005 was there again this year. Before the start of the march, an impressive and honourable commemoration is always held by the participating military contingents from the various countries at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, the resting place of m 2.339 Canadian soldiers. This take place on the Monday before the start of the four-day event. On Thursday, day 3, (zevenheuvelenweg) our Branch 005 is present to support the soldiers with a Colour Party at the Canadian cemetery.

The commemoration was led by A.S.O.O. (Adjutant Sergeant Onder Officier) Manusiwa. RCL005 attended with a full Colour Party, as well as: Bugler: Dirk-Jan Bronsvoot and Piper: René Sijmons (48th Highlanders of Holland). The new Torch was present and was placed at the "Stone of Remembrance." The ceremony was attended by Dutch and international guests and many visitors. Speeches were given, followed by "The Last Post," two minutes of silence, the Lament and Reveille . Comrade Danny Murphy spoke The Act of Remembrance .

Wreaths were laid by: Commander John Haasnoot with his wife; the Mayors of Berg en Dal, Mark Slinkman, and Nijmegen, Hubert Bruls, the March Leader, Henry Sackers; Canadian Military Attaché Marc LaFortune and his Assistant Nicole Mitchel, as well as members of the RCL. British, American and Germany military were also present, along with Canadian police from Calgary, Alberta.

For many soldiers, walkers, and visitors, it is very important to continue to honour the ties between Canada and the Netherlands, and to educate the future generations that we must never forget.

"The Canadians who are here now thank many of us because we continue to honour these young soldiers who died for our freedom. We then tell them that we also do this at Holten and Bergen-op-Zoom and at many other cemeteries. There is a moment of silence. Wow! Really? Thank you so much!"

It was a beautiful and honourable commemoration on a warm, sunny day. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the soldiers and visitors were asked to place their poppy at one of the graves, to stand for a moment to honour them, and to continue to remember them after they return home.

Comrade Alice van Bekkum (also of Faces to Graves) was also in attendance and asked the Colour Party to stand still for a moment at the grave of Lance Corporal George Warren Mollison of the Regina Rifles and was killed on March 29, 1945.

Lance Corporal Mollison's son recently passed away, and asked the members to take a moment to remember them both. Colonel LaFortune placed a candle on his grave.

This was also our Branch's last opportunity to say goodbye to Marc as his term in the Netherlands has come to an end. (See [last issue](#) for his official goodbye)





A Note from Brig-Gen (Ret'd) Ernest B. Beno of Kingston, Ontario, Canada

The 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands is coming up very soon , next May. A committee of mostly Dutch Canadians is creating an amazing Dutch Tribute to Canada to commemorate that event and thank Canadians. The "Tribute" will consist of 20 Dutch stories and 20 Canadian stories of 1944 and 1945. Photographs of witnesses/participants of the liberation period will be mounted on iron "hedgehogs" in a historic field called the "Arsenal Park." On this land is a World War 2 building called the "Small Arms Inspection Building," where weapons and ammunition were tested before going out to the liberation units – the building is now a community cultural centre. The site is associated with parkland, but walking distance from tens of thousands of residents, located in the city of Mississauga – between Toronto and Niagara falls where thousands of Dutch Canadians live.

In addition to this parkland display, there will be Thank You to Canada in gigantic photographs displayed on buildings, bus stops, and billboards in Toronto during the liberation period, and there will be a major event with military bands and Dutch culture displays at the grand opening of the park (3 to 5 May 2025). There will be a handful of World War 2 veterans at our grand event, and unfortunately very few will be able to make it to the Netherlands.

This initiative has the full moral support of the Government of the Netherlands, including the Ambassador to Canada and the Consul General in Toronto Ontario.

To create this tribute the aim is to raise about half a million Canadian dollars, or 350,000 Euros. The fundraising campaign for this is just beginning.

Keep watching your newsletters, social media and Board communication for more information on this amazing initiative!



Paul Kavanagh

Paul is a good friend of our Branch 005. He was director of the Legion National Foundation for 6 years. In the meantime he has started to recruit volunteers for the "Aero Gatineau" in Ottawa. Paul did a lot for Canadian veterans, Legion members & Operation Remembrance. Paul, congratulations on this award.

August 13, 2024

Mr. Paul Kavanagh, M.S.M.

Dear Mr. Kavanagh,



THE CHANCELLERY OF HONOURS
LA CHANCELLERIE DES DISTINCTIONS HONORIFIQUES

Congratulations on your recent award of a Meritorious Service Decoration (Civil Division)! This honour, one of the highest in the country, has been conferred upon you by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary May Simon, Governor General of Canada. It is a testament to your outstanding achievement and service to the nation.

As per your communication with a representative from the Chancellery of Honours, your decoration will be presented at a later date. As well, your name will be published in the Canada Gazette and will appear on our website at www.gg.ca. As of today, you are welcome to use the post-nominals M.S.M. Should you have any questions regarding your decoration, please do not hesitate to contact Jaanu Varaprasatham, Program Manager, Meritorious Service Decorations (Civil Division), at jaanu.varaprasatham@gg.ca.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read "Ian Burgess".

Ian Burgess
Director of Honours, Orders Chancellery
of Honours
Office of the Secretary to the Governor
General



Contributed by Herman Sligman

Does the abbreviation above ring a bell for you? No? Perhaps it will be clearer if I write Information Centre Canadian Cemetery Holten.

Many will recognize the photo on the right; the 'Stone of Remembrance.'

When entering a CWGC cemetery anywhere you will see an identical stone.



Yet, the first impression of the Holten Cemetery is, in my opinion, essentially different from various other CWGC cemeteries.

The free space around the Stone of Remembrance is a beautiful piece of nature, especially during the flowering periods of the various plants.

What also makes CWGC Holten different is a beautifully designed building next to it.

Information Centre

In the information centre, the memory of the fallen servicemen is kept alive with personal stories, anecdotes, and photos. In the cinema, you can watch an impression of the liberation of the northern and eastern parts of the Netherlands. You can also find background information on the cemetery and listen to impressive stories about the fallen servicemen. At the information tables, you can learn even more about the liberation and our liberators.

A Little History

In the mid-1980s, nine friends formed a group who gathered each Saturday afternoon 'to close' the week in an entertaining and informative way. They named themselves 'The Closers.' Next to having an enjoyable few hours, the group felt the pull to do something extra, especially for the Holten community. Among other things, the Closers contributed to the May 4 Memorial held every 5 years at the Canadian Cemetery.

In 2006 the first ideas for a foundation were discussed and developed into a plan, under the inspiring leadership of Gert Jan van 't Holt.



For more information about the ICCC- Holten, please check out the full story on our [website](#).

Coming



September 2024 marks the 80th anniversary of Operation Market Garden, the largest airborne operation in history. While it is remembered as a failure, because it was one 'bridge too far,' our Canadian soldiers stood proudly with the British, American and Polish forces in the fight.

We will share more of the Canadian contribution in the next edition. For now, please take a look at the list of [upcoming events](#) in September and October. We hope to see you there.

Saturday	Sep 14	Seaforth Highlanders of Holland Jubileum Concert
Tuesday,	Sep 17	CWGC Groesbeek: Commemoration Operation Market Garden
Wednesday,	Sep 18	Mook: Commemoration at Monument for Antonio Barbaro
Thursday,	Sep 19	CWGC Jonkerbos: 80 Years of Liberation Nijmegen
Saturday,	Sep 21	Ede: Ginkel Heath: Airborne Landings and Commemoration Driel: Commemoration at Engineers Monument
Sunday,	Sep 22	Oosterbeek: Commemoration Operation Market Garden
Friday,	Oct 4	Driel: Commemoration 7th Btn Hampshire Regiment Driel: Commemoration 101st Airborne Division Groesbeek: Indigenous Legacy Commemoration
Saturday,	Oct 5	Veenendaal: Commemoration of FO Harold Wakeman

Editor's Message:

A HUGE thank you to all of our contributors this month! It was hard to fit all the stories in!

If you have a story you would like to share, please send them to liaisonofficer@rcl.org in Word (or another editable format). We will do our best to share all of the stories.

Specifically, please share photos of your travels to other Canadian Legions, monuments you find as you go, and the amazing people you meet. Are you descended from or related to a past or current Canadian soldier? We'd love to share the story!

Why is Branch 005 important to you?

The newsletter is a wonderful place to share our stories and get to know each other even better.

Thank you for your help and support!

*Berry Swarthoff
Amanda Slotboom*



Join us in wishing
D-Day Veteran
JIM PARKS
A HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY!

We are inviting people to send birthday cards to Jim
to mark this special occasion!

Jim landed on Juno Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944 with the
Royal Winnipeg Rifles. We are thankful for his service and want to wish him the best as
he reaches this milestone!

Mail cards c/o Tish MacDonald, 8 Caseton Crescent, Uxbridge, ON L9P 1Z8

Find us online:



Please support our Branch

All donations are appreciated and always welcome. We have ANBI status. All donations qualify for a tax deduction. Please visit the link to our website above.