

The
Maple Leaf
Legacy
Project



L'heritage
de la feuille
d'erable

UPDATE!

A Project in Remembrance of Canada's War Dead

Latest Numbers

The aim of the Maple Leaf Legacy Project is to photograph or obtain a photograph of every Canadian War Grave of the 20th Century.

On January 27, 2005 the number of Canadian war graves or commemorations photographed on hand is:

80,049

On the above date

835

commemorations were added.

This project relies solely on the kind assistance of the hundreds of volunteers and sponsors around the world to get the photographs or to donate funds to help pay for the good work of the project. To date the project has been honoured with the assistance of at least

521

wonderful and generous volunteers from around the world who have contributed photographs or other services.

*For Canada, for Canadians,
for the fallen, lest we forget.*

We remember

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Greetings to you all and best wishes for 2005.

So, another year passes into history and the promises, hopes and dreams of a new year are spread out before us. For us involved with the MLLP, our hopes are high for realising the start of one of the project's founding concepts - that of a searchable database of war grave photos. After four years of waiting patiently for the right time and right people to come together to put this database online, it seems like the time has finally arrived.

Dan Cvitanovich, of E-Omni, based in Duncan, BC is currently fine tuning the search engine so that it will be everything we want it to be when it is ready to go live in February. However, that does not mean you will immediately be able to look up your grandfather's grave photo. It will still take many volunteers many years to be able to get all the images uploaded and into the system. Having said that, I think that if everything goes according to plan, the searchable archive will grow very quickly. I would expect to see at least ten thousand searchable names with images online by the end of 2005.

That doesn't mean we have all of those images yet. Far from it. There are still some 35,000 graves to be photographed around the world. By the way things are going and the constant growth of our volunteer base, I would expect to have the majority of those by sometime in 2008.

Another wonderful development for the project, and me, is the soon to open project office here in Ieper, Belgium. The location, which will double as my residence, is an apartment just a few steps from, and overlooking, the Menin Gate. I am very excited by this development too as I am getting sick of living in sub-standard one room accommodation which I have had since moving to Europe in 1998. It will be very nice to have a few creature comforts, like heat and hot water, in a brand new apartment for a change. With the agreement of our sister projects, I hope to be able to represent and promote all of the projects from this location.

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I had the opportunity, over the holidays, to visit Ottawa where I gave a couple of my talks on Canadian war graves and the project to two of the genealogy groups in the area at the National Library and Archives. The talks were well attended and received, despite my cold, dry mouth, chapped lips, sniffles etc. While in Ottawa I also met with the Director of 'Canada Remembers', an agency of Veteran's Affairs Canada, the Director of Historical Research and Exhibit Development and the Manager of Exhibitions and Programs at the new Canadian War Museum, the Manager of Special Projects at the Directorate of History and Heritage at National Defence. All meetings were warm and positive and will hopefully lay the foundations for future co-operation between the MLLP and the government of Canada. I was joined at two of these meetings by MLLP board member and volunteer, LCol Eric Reid.

One of the topics discussed with the Canada Remembers Unit Director, Terry Tobin, was the issue raised in this newsletter a couple of months ago, that of the hundreds of mistakes in the list of names of the missing as inscribed on the Vimy Memorial. I am optimistic

that once the numbers of mistakes, or anomalies are realised by the people who make these decisions, the new inscriptions to be done during the major renovations to the Vimy Memorial will correct these mistakes and omissions that were made more than 70



MLLP Director Steve Douglas at the National Library and Archives in Ottawa, Ontario

years ago. Stay tuned and I will let you know the outcome in an upcoming issue.

I also gave one of my talks to a grade 10 class at John F Ross Collegiate in Guelph, Ontario. It is important to speak to the young people in Canada on this subject as so little is part of their curriculum. It was a pleasure and an honour to be able to do so. They certainly seem to get a lot out of it and appreciate it. My thanks go out to the staff at JF Ross for arranging the talk.

It was great seeing my old friend Matt Smith, Director of the Australian project, who was visiting from Brisbane. Over the two weeks, Matt and I and some other volunteers like Matt's parents, Jill and Geoff (who were here while touring Europe) and Fred Killick and Peter Bennett spent time photographing graves in the Ypres area and on the Somme. More than one bottle of beer was cracked open considering the heritage of this crowd and the reputation of the suds in Belgium.

Well that ought to wrap things up for this month. Don't forget to send in anything you think other MLLP'ers will be interested in, especially the bizarre coincidences. Also, if you have a Royal Canadian Legion branch near you, and I know that you do, perhaps you could send me the name and address of the President and the branch so that we can follow up on a fund raising campaign.

Best wishes for 2005.

Steve Douglas
Project Founder & Director

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEERS

This is the section that belongs to you - the volunteers and regional representatives. Why not let everyone know what's going on in your part of the world by sending us photos, progress reports or news about events? Please send your submissions to dcrory@chebucto.ns.ca with "MLLP Newsletter" in the subject line.

....from Australian Director Matt Smith

Speaking of Australian Director Matt Smith, here's a great picture of Matt, taken on the Somme in France, where he presented me with a MLLP banner he had had quilted in Australia. It will be a great place to stitch various patches and fasten pins received from people. Thanks Matt!

By the way, the statue in the background is one of five Caribou Monuments that stand watch over battle sites in France and Belgium where Newfoundland soldiers distinguished themselves in the First World War.



KENNETH BROWN
 The death occurred over the week-end in the Victoria General Hospital, Halifax, of Kenneth Brown, 31, well known resident of Ashby and member of the Ashby branch of the Canadian Legion.
 He entered Camp Hill Hospital a fortnight ago for treatment and was transferred to the Victoria General Hospital where death occurred on Sunday.
 He was born in Sydney and has a host of friends and acquaintances, also Second World War associates will learn of his passing with deep regret.
 He was active in St. Theresa's parish and in the Ashby Legion.
 He is survived by his widow, four sons and one daughter.
 Also one brother Angus, and a sister, Mrs. Ethel Harty, both in Sydney.
 He was employed at the Steel Company in the blast furnace department.
 The remains are resting at his residence on Prince Street and the funeral will be held Wednesday morning with Mass of Requiem at St. Theresa's Church at nine o'clock. Burial in Holy Cross Cemetery.

Cape Breton Post
 27 October 1953
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....from Nova Scotia Rep Ken Roberts

This month Ken has an interesting tale which makes us think he could have a second career as a detective! In December Project Director Steve Douglas asked Ken to look into finding the grave of a World War II veteran buried somewhere in Nova Scotia. The Veteran's granddaughter had been trying to find out where her grandfather was buried and having no luck, turned to the MLLP for help.

Through much research involving the Nova Scotia archives, Ken found that the veteran was buried in Holy Cross Cemetery in Sydney, Nova Scotia and Ken even managed to get a copy of the obituary to pass along to the grateful granddaughter. Ken is hoping to get a photograph of the grave whenever the Nova Scotia MLLP volunteers are able to do the cemetery. In the meantime, he would like to share the nice thank you letter he received and the copy of the obituary.

January 10, 2005

Hello Ken,

Thank you very much for the information you sent me. It has helped out a lot and do hope there is more you can do. I'd love it if you sent me more information and a picture of the grave. This has meant so much to my dad and he greatly appreciates it. But once again thank you for your help and I hope to hear from you again soon. – S.J. Regina, Saskatchewan

WEB LINKS***2005 – Year of the Veteran***

The Government of Canada has declared 2005 the Year of the Veteran. Throughout the year, Canadians will celebrate, honour, remember and teach our youth about the contributions and sacrifice of our veterans.

Every year is an important year to honour veterans and their service and 2005 is especially meaningful because it marks the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. A highlight of the year will be the government's development of a new Veterans Charter that will better support releasing Canadian Forces members and their families who are re-entering civilian life.

Get more information at:

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=feature/yearofveteran05>

PRESS CLIPS

Prime minister pays tribute to Canadian war dead in Hong Kong
2005/1/23 AP
HONG KONG

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin attended a memorial service Sunday at a war cemetery (Sai Wan Bay) to pay tribute to about 550 Canadian soldiers killed during the Japanese invasion of the former British colony in World War II.

"These men engaged in acts of heroism that those of us who read the history by the fireplace could never begin to understand and they fought, and they fought and they fought," Martin said at the memorial.

The Prime Minister and the Canadian war veterans then observed a moment of silence and laid wreaths at a war monument at the Sai Wan War Cemetery, with children singing "Amazing Grace" and the Chinese and Canadian national anthems.

In December 1941, a force made up of British, Canadian and Hong Kong soldiers surrendered to the Japanese after resisting an invasion for about two weeks.

Paul Martin arrived in Hong Kong from Beijing on Saturday. Earlier, he had visited Japan and tsunami-devastated countries Thailand, Sri Lanka and India as part of his Asian tour.



*Sai Wan Bay Cemetery,
Hong Kong. MLLP file photo*

MONUMENTS PROFILED

As mentioned in the PRESS CLIPS section above, Canadian Prime Minister, Paul Martin, paid a visit to **Sai Wan Bay Cemetery and Memorial in Hong Kong** on January 23 as part of his Asian Tour. This memorial honours those men of the land forces of the British Commonwealth and Empire who died in the defence of Hong Kong during the Second World War. Of the 2,071 names, 228 are Canadian.

The Memorial, which is in the form of a shelter building 24 metres long and 5.5 metres wide, stands at the entrance to Sai Wan Bay War Cemetery, outside Victoria, the capital of Hong Kong.



MLLP File Photo

From the semi-circular forecourt, two wide openings lead to the interior of the building. The names are inscribed on panels of Portland stone. The dedicatory inscription reads:

1939-1945

**THE OFFICERS AND MEN WHOSE MEMORY IS HONOURED
HERE DIED IN THE DEFENCE OF HONG KONG IN DECEMBER
1941 AND IN THE ENSUING YEARS OF CAPTIVITY AND HAVE
NO KNOWN GRAVE**

The northern side of the Memorial is open, and four granite piers support the copper roof. From a commanding position 305 metres above sea level, it looks out over the War Cemetery where some 1,500 men lie buried, and across the water to Mainland China - a magnificent view of sea and mountains.

(Material courtesy of Veterans Affairs Canada)

POEMS AND PROSE

The poem this month is by Dyneley Hussey (1893-1972), who was a Lieutenant in the Thirteenth Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers

**Ode To A Young Man
(Who Died of Wounds in Flanders, January 1915)
(In Memoriam R.W.R.G.)**

Can it be true that thou art dead
In the hour of thy youth, in the day of thy strength?
Must I believe thy soul has fled
Through heaven's length?

A scholar wast thou, learn'd in lore;
Poet was written in thine eyes.
Thou ne'er wast meant for bloody war

To seize in prize.

Yet when they asked thee, "Lo! what dost thou bring?"

Thou gav'st thyself,
Thou gav'st thy body, gav'st thy soul;
Thou gav'st thyself, one consecrated whole
To sacrificial torture for thy King.

O lovely youth, slaughtered at manhood's dawn,
In virgin purity thou liest dead,
And slaughtered were thy sons unborn,
With thee unwed.

Sleep on, pure youth, sleep at Earth's soothing breast,
No king's sarcophagus was e'er so fine
As that poor shallow soldier's grave of thine,
Where all ungarlanded thou tak'st thy rest.

MLLP Contact Information:

Maple Leaf Legacy Project
PO Box 30,
8900 IEPER 1,
BELGIUM
Tel: (0032) 57 214-879
sdouglas2001@hotmail.com

Address for sending tax deductible donations:

Maple Leaf Legacy Project
Suite 401, 933 17 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2T 5R6

For newsletter submissions:

dcroxy@chebucto.ns.ca

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