

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 July 23, 2004 the number of Canadian war graves or commemorations photographed on hand is:

70,498

On the above date

885

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

480

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 all,

Well summer seems to have finally arrived here in Flanders. It was a long cool spring. Not entirely a bad thing to me. In the last Update, I mentioned the possibility of a battlefield trip/photo excursion next spring. It occurred to me that next spring is the 60th anniversary of VE Day and there shall be many events and commemorations across Europe. I suspect that many of them will be in the Netherlands so perhaps we could focus on that area if there is any interest. We have had a few emails expressing interest in a trip but no details have been worked out. If we are to do this, something will need to be organised pretty soon so if you are of a mind to go, please let me know as soon as possible.

One of the pleasures of living here, besides being surrounded by history, is that, because Ypres is the focal point of the western front, many of the project volunteers make their way here occasionally. This month saw MLLP board member and volunteer photographer, Eric Reid and his family, of Ottawa make an all too brief visit to Ypres. A few days later it was the turn of American volunteers Gary & Corine Nelson. And this weekend Toronto teacher Eric McGeer stuck his nose through the door. Today, Eric and I and Belgian volunteer Real Demarets began the photography of two of the larger cemeteries in the area, Tyne Cot Cemetery and Passchendaele New British Cemetery, clicking almost 1500 images between us. Another rare treat was a visit by Australian project director Matt Smith's parents Jill and Geoff Smith, of Brisbane. Who knows who else may drop by this summer? It was a pleasure to see everyone.

July 1 marks the anniversary of the 1st day of the Battle of the Somme (1916). Again this year I attended the commemorations at Newfoundland Park, Beaumont-Hamel, France. I try to represent the project at these events and promote the cause to anyone who will listen. Two other project promoters, Belgian volunteers Iris & Daniel Van Landschoot were also there in their role as flag bearers for the Royal Canadian Legion. They are hoping to start a Belgian chapter of the RCL. They were joined by other RCL members and Canadian military personnel from bases in Germany.

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Speaking of the Canadian military, various serving members are proving to be enthusiastic volunteers for the project at various postings around the world. I have been contacted by soldiers serving in the Golan Heights to do some photos in Syria, Turkey and Germany to do some of

the graves there. It is just great to get help from our current serving soldiers to honour their predecessors. Wishing you all a safe and super summer holiday. Next issue will be at the end of August so if you have ANYTHING that you think might go in the Update, please send it to Dale. I will start the ball rolling with a new

idea for bizarre coincidences to do with the project or war graves in general. If you've got 'em, let's hear 'em.

Regards,

Steve Douglas
Project Founder & Director



Volunteers on July 1 at Newfoundland Park in Beaumont-Hamel. The event was the 88th anniversary commemoration of the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916, where the Royal Newfoundland Regiment had over 700 casualties. left to right Daniel & Iris Van Landschoot of Belgium, Geoff and Jill Smith from Australia (Australian project Director Matt Smith's parents), myself, and Fred Killick, an English volunteer now living in France. Iris and Daniel are RCL members and members of the RCL colour party at various events across Europe.

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. Thanks to the following representatives and volunteers who have already sent us material.

Nova Scotia: Coordinator Sue Borgersen sent us these photos taken when Saskatchewan Representatives June and Bryce Bates dropped in to see her and her husband Arne while they were vacationing in Nova Scotia. Sue writes it was very nice to see the Bates, but it was very early in the morning! Thanks for sharing the photos, Sue.



Oh so early... Susan Borgersen and June Bates from Saskatchewan June 2004 in Sue's kitchen at East Port Medway, Queens County, Nova Scotia

Sue with husband Arne Borgersen. Photo taken by June Bates - oh so tired... please hold me up!



Newfoundland

Newfoundlanders Pay Homage to their Fallen

Although July 1st is celebrated across Canada as our nation's birthday, in Newfoundland the day is also known as Memorial Day, a day set aside to remember the horrific loss of the Newfoundlanders who fell at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916 (see page 1). This year's Memorial Day ceremonies took on a special significance as the Province rededicated the Caribou monument that has been the main feature of Bowring Park in downtown St. John's since 1928. The monument is a replica of the same Caribou statue that stands on guard at Beaumont-Hamel and also of the four others that stand watch over battle sites in France and Belgium where Newfoundland soldiers distinguished themselves in the First World War.

The St. John's Caribou statue was taken down last November restored to its original condition and then returned to its place of honour in Bowring Park in time for the Memorial Day ceremonies. On hand for the rededication ceremony were the current members of the Newfoundland Regiment, provincial and federal government officials



Caribou Monument in St. John's, Nfld.

and representatives of the government of France. The acclaimed City of St. John's Pipe and Drum band provided the musical accompaniment, which was a fitting role for the members as they had just returned from a tour of Flanders.

The Band members performed at all five Caribou memorials in Flanders: Beaumont-Hamel, Monchy-le-Preux, Guedecourt, and Masnieres (all in France) and Courtrai (Belgium). The band also visited the Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge and the Pipers' Monument at Longueval and also managed a side trip to Ieper where they took part in the nightly Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. There are lots of great photos of the Band's trip on their web page at <http://home.thezone.net/~dallison/tour.htm> Another interesting web page that provides background on each Caribou monument is the "First World War Memorials in Europe", a site maintained by the Canadian Department of Veterans Affairs. Check it out at <http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=memorials/ww1mem>

PRESS CLIPS

Service Held In Nova Scotia to Honour Fallen Airmen

The Middleton Nova Scotia Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion held its annual memorial service on June 7 at the Commonwealth Graves Commission plot at the Old Holy Trinity Church in Middleton. The service honours 34 British Commonwealth airmen who died during World War II while training at nearby Royal Air Force Station Greenwood, now the 14 Wing Canadian Forces Base Greenwood.

Twenty-seven of the airmen are buried at the Middleton cemetery, while another seven are at the Roman Catholic cemetery in neighboring Kingston. Participants in the memorial ceremony included the 14 Wing Greenwood Pipe and Drum Band and honour guard, legion colour parties, legionnaires, and members of the 14 Wing and local air cadets.

A list of the airmen who are buried at both cemeteries can be found on the "War Moments in Canada" website:

<http://www.stemnet.nf.ca/monuments/ns/imperial.htm>

(Sources: *Chronicle Herald*, June 8, 2004 Halifax, Nova Scotia and "Digital Collections" Government of Canada, <http://collections.ic.gc.ca>)



The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Plot at the Old Holy Trinity Church in Middleton, Nova Scotia. Photo courtesy of "Digital Collections"

Newfoundland Should Have 'Tomb': Councilor

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND — A St. John's city councillor says Newfoundland and Labrador should have its own Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Coun. Art Puddister says the memorial with the remains of an unidentified soldier could be located at the war memorial on Duckworth Street in St. John's.



St. John's, Newfoundland war memorial

"When we came into Confederation the national government agreed that our war memorial would be a national memorial," he says. "Seeing that in all these allied countries, all these memorials have their own tomb of the unknown soldier, I thought it was an excellent idea that we have our own tomb of the unknown soldier. One of our soldiers should be repatriated from Beaumont Hamel back to St. John's."

Canada already has a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. In 2000, the remains of an unidentified Canadian soldier who died in the First World War were repatriated from France and were buried in a tomb in front of the National War Memorial in Ottawa.

(Source: *CBC News Newfoundland July 14, 2004*)

SISTER PROJECTS UPDATE

As we mentioned last month, our long-time volunteer photographer Ralph McLean of Winnipeg is busy starting up a South African Project. Here's a recent update from Ralph:

"Hello to all MLLP volunteers and thanks to Director Steve Douglas for giving me this opportunity to update everyone on the exciting new South Africa War Graves Project. As I write this, the website is being built and there should be a shell ready reallllyyy soon, however, my webmaster is slacking off! As for the project work itself, I've started sorting cemetery lists and have three



countries done so far. By the way, I'll be looking for all sorts of volunteers, photographers, those interested in sorting lists, entering data into an Access database (easy), and regular project volunteer work.

This is your big chance to get in on the ground floor of another exciting project to honour the fallen. Just drop me a line at sawgp_ralph@hotmail.com to let me know how you can help, or just to say hello. A big thanks in advance."

Ralph McLean.

SOLDIER POETS

A Soldier's Grave

Then in the lull of midnight, gentle arms
Lifted him slowly down the slopes of death,
Lest he should hear again the mad alarms
Of battle, dying moans, and painful breath,

And where the earth was soft for flowers we made
A grave for him that he might better rest.
So, Spring shall come and leave it sweet arrayed,
And there the lark shall turn her dewy nest.

*By Francis Ledwidge, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
Killed by a shell near Ypres, 31st July 1917*

WEB LINKS

I have to admit my bias here, but I think my hometown newspaper the Halifax (Nova Scotia) Chronicle Herald & Mail-Star did a superb job in covering last month's observances of the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings. As a service to their readers, the "Herald" editors bundled all their articles to make a unique on-line package of wire service stories, local articles, commentaries, editorials and even reviews of new books on Canada's role in the invasion. This site is definitely "A-1" and will be of interest to anyone who wants to learn more about this historical event. Check it out at:

<http://www.herald.ns.ca/cgi-bin/home/package?Normandy> or if this link doesn't work, you can also access the articles through the "Canada" section of the Herald home page at www.herald.ns.ca.

Found a new, interesting link to share? Just drop me a line at: dcroxy@chebucto.ns.ca and I'll put it in the next edition. Thanks! – Dale Croy

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