

# THE BEECHWOOD WAY

## MAGAZINE

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20 YEARS OF TRANSITION  
AND MILESTONES**

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IN BEECHWOOD CEMETERY  
HERE THE GRASS SLEEPS THE QUIET DEAD, NO SOUND  
DISTURBS THEM EVER, AND NO ITOM M DREAMS,  
WINTER AND SNOW CARRIES THE YEARS OFF WITH  
AND THE WIND HOWLS ABOVE THE WOODLANDS HILL,  
SPRINGTIME AND SUMMER AND WITH AUTUMN FALL,  
WITH LEAF AND BLOSSOM AND BIRCH OF WIND AND RAIN,  
AND THE OLD BARKS FETE FORTH HIS YOUNG SWAY,  
BY THEM DREAMS OF DREAMS AND ENHANCED  
OUR MEMORIES TO THEM ARE NOT AS THOUGH  
IN THE DIM GLOAM OF SOME FAR-OFF CLIME,  
UNALTERED REST THEIR PERFECT BEING CLOAKS  
A LING'ING TON SAYS TO GRAY ON BELL ON THE  
CHILDREN OF SILENCE AND ETERNITY,  
THEY KNOW NO SEASON BUT THE END OF TIME.  
ARCHIBALD LAWMAN  
COMPOSED - AUGUST 12, 1894

# Letter from the editor

As spring quickly turned to summer, Beechwood Cemetery is alive with activities. People are coming to discover these beautiful grounds and the nearly 150 years of history. The activities and events over the course of the last few months have been well received and attended by the public.

We have hosted our annual events such as the Butterfly Walk to Remember with the Bereaved Families of Ottawa, The National Memorial Ride, and have a few Chamberfest concerts coming up.

We have also introduced new events from hosting Veterans Days at the Canadian Tulip Festival to a Vintage Car show that celebrated the combined history of Beechwood and the automobile. Beechwood joined Doors Open Ottawa and saw four to five hundred people come for tours and discover what you already all knew, that Beechwood is a gem inside the city. We also welcomed A Company of Fools' Torchlight Shakespeare Series of a Twelfth Night, who performed behind our Mausoleum. On Sunday, July 8th, we held a signature event with the Vanier BIA and Secret Dinners, where guests were welcomed to Beechwood for a five star gourmet meal cooked by a local chef in our community.

We are always trying to find new and innovative activities and events to peak people's interest and have them connect to Beechwood Cemetery in a meaningful way.

This June marked the retirement of our longstanding President and Executive Director Roger Boulton. After nearly 30 years, Roger thought it was time to retire and spend time with his grand kids. Dr. André Levesque has a wonderful retrospective about his career and contribution to Beechwood.

Andy Roy has been named the new President and Executive Director. We have an article in this issue discussing the future of Beechwood and Andy's guiding principle. Beechwood is in great hands.

As always, I hope to see you at future events and most important 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, Bob White, Andy Roy, André Levesque, Erika Wagner.

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

We want your feedback on how we are doing! Contact Erika Wagner at [foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca](mailto:foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca)

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# BEECHWOOD CEMETERY: 20 YEARS OF TRANSITION AND MILESTONES

*by Robert White, Beechwood Cemetery Foundation Board Member*

**B**eechwood Cemetery has made great strides over the past 20 years. It all started back in 1998 following a seven year legal battle, where Beechwood's Board of Directors succeeded in preventing ownership of the cemetery from being taken over by individuals wishing to further their personal financial interests.

Immediately following the successful litigation, the Board of Directors set out to change Beechwood's governance structure to ensure that the cemetery would operate forever on a not-for-profit basis for the benefit of our community. This goal was achieved in 2000 when ownership of the cemetery was transferred to the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation, which is legally a not-for-profit corporation and also a registered charity under the Income Tax Act.

Beechwood received its first major honour in 2001, being designated a National Historic Site. In conferring this honour, Heritage Canada described Beechwood as "an attractive rural cemetery designed according to the principles of American rural cemeteries with its winding interlacing roads, islets of irregular shapes and varying sizes, on hilly terrain, in a naturalistic pastoral setting with many picturesque perspectives including glimpses of Ottawa through the trees."

Also in 2001, Beechwood became the National Cemetery of the Canadian Forces. The then Governor General Adrienne Clarkson officiated at the opening ceremony which featured a twenty-one gun salute, a full Ceremonial Guard and a fly-past by a flight of CF-18 fighter jets in a lost-man formation. Taking up the example of the military, Beechwood staff worked with the RCMP Veterans - Ottawa Division to create the RCMP National Memorial Cemetery in 2006.

With Beechwood's business growing dramatically, a major addition to the old farmhouse office building was completed in 2004. This was the first significant building project undertaken at Beechwood in over 40 years.

More importantly was the construction of the Beechwood National Memorial Centre, which was officially opened in April 2008 by Governor General Michaëlle Jean. The Beechwood National Memorial Centre is an achievement of national and international significance that is considered to be unique in the world. It was conceived following extensive consultations with local faith leaders and the Ontario Multi-Faith Council. The nine-sided Sacred Space serves the commemorative needs of Canadians of diverse backgrounds. At the heart of the room rest a centuries-weathered and storied boulder unearthed from Beechwood's 160-acre property which reminds people that, in the midst of transient life, there is a permanence in the grander order of things.



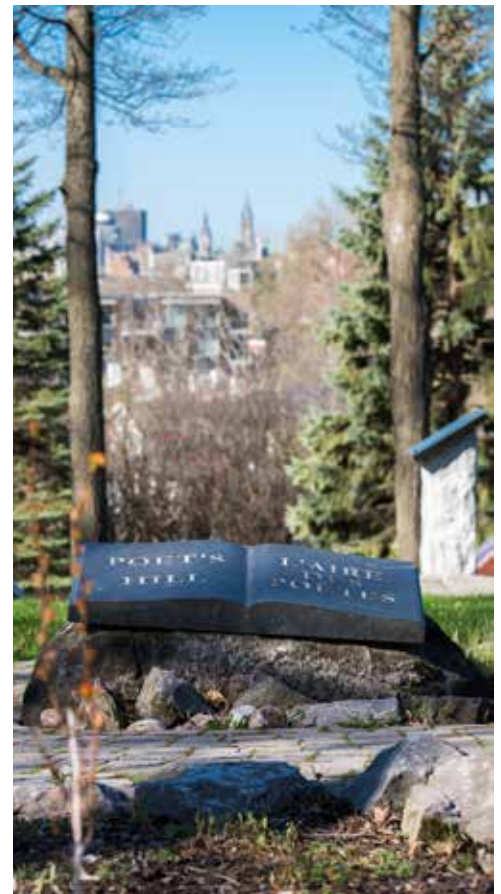
The Beechwood National Memorial Centre also houses the inspirational “Hall of Colours” that serves exclusively the memorial needs of the Canadian Forces, RCMP members and our Veterans. The retired Colours (flags) of Canada’s army, naval and air force regiments are mounted at ceiling level. Following tradition, these flags will remain honourably suspended and untouched until, with the passing of time, they completely disintegrate.

Another major milestone took place in 2012, when Beechwood became one of the first independent cemeteries in Ontario to offer full-fledged funeral services, following changes in legislation that allowed cemeteries to own and operate funeral homes.

Beechwood’s greatest honour, however, is having been designated as the National Cemetery of Canada. While the original initiative to make Beechwood Canada’s National Cemetery was a passion of Liberal MP Mauril Bélanger, the idea was quickly picked-up by all political parties. The bill to make Beechwood Canada’s National Cemetery was tabled in Parliament by the Conservative Government in 2013 with the House Leader making the following introductory statement: “I would like to take a quick moment to thank my colleagues and the other parties for their cooperation in expediting this legislation. This is a clear demonstration of how Parliament can work when we have set aside our partisan differences and work for the good of the Canadian people, who have entrusted us to represent them.”

Looking ahead, we are now working on plans for a further major expansion to the Beechwood National Memorial Centre and our office complex. In addition, we are expanding our Botanical Cremations Gardens and redeveloping the St-Laurent entrance. Furthermore, we plan major further enhancements to Beechwood’s landscaping to ensure the cemetery will continue to be a place of pastoral beauty for all Canadians to both honour those who have left this world before us and to enjoy themselves.

While Beechwood has undergone a huge number of beneficial changes over the past 20 years, we expect the next 20 years to be just as exciting.



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# ROGER BOULT – FROM LANDSCAPE HORTICULTURIST TO PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT BEECHWOOD CEMETERY – SERVING THE OTTAWA COMMUNITY FOR THIRTY YEARS

*by Dr. André Levesque, Volunteer Chief Historian*

I first had the honour and privilege of meeting Roger Boulton twenty years ago when I began planning for the repatriation of Canada's Unknown Soldier from Vimy, France to Ottawa and was looking for expert advice on the treatment of the dead and how they were being memorialized. It was clear then that Roger was a professional with a passion for embracing nature with history along with a desire to best serve the Ottawa community with respect and compassion. Little did he know, that upon being hired by Beechwood Cemetery in 1988 as the operations manager, he would remain with them for three decades working and influencing every aspect of the Cemetery's Company and Foundation.

After graduating from Algonquin College with a diploma in Horticulture and Landscaping, he landed his first job in applying his craft with a lawn care company in Ottawa. Thirteen years later – at the prompting of an older aunt – he responded to a newspaper ad and was hired at Beechwood to professionalize the operations and the maintenance of the equipment in the early days of the Horticultural Department. Roger's hiring was in line with Beechwood's very long history of horticultural care that dates back to 1873 – where they were careful to choose people who were prominent in the horticultural world.

Over his thirty year's stay, Roger continued Beechwood's fine tradition as a way to pay homage to Alpine Grant who was the first person to help design the road network and horticultural aspect of the Cemetery. Knowing that it was important to be exposed to everything that is relevant to cemetery operations and gain valuable experience, he then went on to become a cemetery counselor, followed by administrative assistant. In about 1999, he became assistant general manager and remained in that position until 2006, when he became director of operations. Three years later, he took on the responsibility of chief operating officer and in 2015, he was named president of Beechwood Cemetery Company and also executive director of the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation.





It is impossible not to mention some of the major projects and activities that Roger has accomplished during his tenure at Beechwood. One of the most visible success stories of Beechwood is the expansion of the modernization of the cemetery that occurred with the creation of the Botanical Cremation Gardens as a major focal point for remembrance. This was one of the more modern, progressive design of an urn garden in Eastern Canada that was extremely popular with the clientele and the City of Ottawa. The urn spaces that were allocated for that area were quickly acquired and as a result, started a process of expansion towards the North that is still ongoing today. This project was a catalyst to the creation of the now highly regarded National Military Cemetery established in 2001. The National Military Cemetery is something that continues to influence how Beechwood will develop in the next little while. Up until the turning of the millennium, Beechwood's operations were housed in the old stable that was built in 1880 – a very cramped, drafty, stone building. Under Roger's guidance, the team was able to design and build a functional, modern space for operations that was inviting to staff, volunteers, visitors and clients. Another facility that required considerable attention was the crematorium as it had a fifty year-old retort\* in the basement of the mausoleum. Beechwood now has its own new crematorium building with all modernized equipment.

Roger Boulton shared some of his thoughts with me about the continued importance of Beechwood on how it provides society a place for people to come and gather and remember a person. Memorialization is a key aspect of the service offered at a cemetery and this is something that cemeterians and funeral directors are intrinsically involved in on a day to day basis. They have the responsibility to help educate families when they meet with them to let them know there are many ways to remember the deceased. It is not the size of a memorial stone or plaque that makes better remembrance, it can also be through other means such as a tree dedication or a leaf on the Tree of Life where that person's name is recorded in perpetuity. With the advent of the internet, there are other ways to commemorate our family members and friends. As well, the recent addition of holding funeral services on site will enable Beechwood to help remember many more people than ever before and encourage those attending to engage in an act of remembrance and visit the graves and markers of cherished ones, often and with others.

Despite Roger Boulton's official retirement on Canada Day 2018, he will continue his lifelong passion and interest with Beechwood Cemetery in a volunteer capacity. During his career of three decades at Beechwood, he met with thousands of people, including board members, staff, volunteers, family members and friends and left behind an important legacy of remembrance and education for future generations. During all those years "he has stood on the shoulders of giants that came before him", but today, he has now become one of those giants. Thank you for your incredible service and dedication Mr. Roger Boulton!

\*A retort is the proper name for the chamber where the cremation process takes place.



Roger Boulton standing at the Botanical Cremation Gardens of Beechwood

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# A NEW BEGINNING WITH ANDY ROY

by *Nicolas McCarthy*

Replacing Roger Boult as President and Executive Director of Beechwood Cemetery was truly a daunting task. The Beechwood Cemetery Board of Directors wanted to ensure that no stone was left unturned, developed a transparent process that reviewed potential candidates both internally and externally. After an exhaustive series of reviews, interviews and e-mail questionnaires, the Board of Directors nominated and approved Andrew (Andy) Roy.

This 4th generation cemeterian joined the Beechwood family in May 2013. Andy brought with him over thirty-plus years of experience in the cemetery industry, having had worked at the Mount Royal Cemetery in Montréal and Riverside Cemetery in Lindsay, Ontario. Andy is a two-time past President of the Ontario Association of Cemetery and Funeral Professionals (OACFP), and has served as Chairman of the Funeral Profession Coalition Council of Canada (FPCCC) twice.

I took some time to meet with Andy and talk about Beechwood

Andy is leading Beechwood at a time of tremendous growth, not only in the cemetery and funeral business but as well in the work of the Foundation. He wants to continue to support our local communities, increase activities and continue to strengthen the ties between us. “The success of Beechwood is really the success of the communities, together we are building this national cemetery,” Andy said.

Historically Beechwood has always been a cemetery; by comparison, the funeral home is new. Ottawans and Canadians are really starting to see Beechwood as their full service location. “Our staff is dedicated to ensuring that every aspect of Beechwood is reflective of our values. The time is taken to make the grounds look beautiful, the funeral service is perfect and reflects the desires of the family, and the burial is done with the dignity and respect we all would want for our loved ones”, said Andy.

“With the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation”, Andy continues, “Beechwood will continue to be a focal point in our region for cultural, historical and artistic events. As the National Cemetery of Canada, Beechwood has a key role in not only supporting events, but being a promoter of our shared history.” As Ottawans and Canadians continue to discover Beechwood, we are continuously developing new activities and programs to encourage them to visit.

As Andy takes on this daunting new role and responsibilities, he mentions, “My hope is to really ensure that people understand that cemeteries are places for the living. Years ago, people would visit cemeteries and have a picnic with their loved ones. That sense of connection is important. Beyond that, cemeteries play an important role in a city. They provide a beautiful green space, where people can walk through, look around and take a moment to reflect”.

Andy’s guiding principle is that cemeteries should be places for the living and enjoyed by the communities around them.



# 82,000 STORIES TO SHARE – I VOW TO THEE MY COUNTRY

By Erika Wagner, Program and Fundraising Coordinator

Roger Boulton was never shy to share personal stories, many of which started with; “I was working at my desk when I received a phone call.” The fascinating story of Cecil Spring-Rice began just like this. *Vow to Thee My Country*, a hymn sung at his father’s funeral. After discovering the words had originally been penned by British born Cecil Spring-Rice, Prime sought to find out more about Spring-Rice.

One of Britain’s most senior diplomats before and during the First World War, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice was posted in Stockholm, Sweden when he wrote the poem *I Vow to Thee My Country*. In 1912, he was appointed Ambassador to the United States with the goal of influencing the government into joining the British in the war against Germany. This required working closely with the American government and resulted in him being Theodore Roosevelt’s best man upon his marriage to Edith Carrow. Suddenly in 1918, Spring-Rice was recalled to London. On his way, he stopped in Ottawa to visit his wife’s cousin, who at the time was the Duke of Devonshire, the Governor General of Canada. It was at Rideau Hall that Cecil Spring-Rice died suddenly. Due to the war there was no repatriation of the dead, therefore he was buried in Ottawa.

Having been forgotten for so many years, despite people in Britain looking for him, it wasn’t until Roger Boulton received a call in 2013 from Prime, that Cecil Spring-Rice was found once again. Interestingly, Roger noticed that Rideau Hall had been the ones to purchase the land for where Spring-Rice was buried. Roger described how the British celebrated finding the man who had crafted such a beautiful song and how they installed a plaque explaining his impact on the world. The unveiling occurred on Friday June 7, 2013. Involved in the ceremony were Deputy British High Commissioner Corin Robertson, MP for Ajax-Pickering and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence Chris Alexander, British High Commissioner of Canada Howard Drake, Major General (ret’d) David Fraser, Former Commander Multinational Brigade Afghanistan, along with family members of Spring-Rice and Beechwood Board of Director members.

## I vow to thee my country

*I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,  
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;  
The love that asks no question, the love that stands the test,  
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;  
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,  
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.*

*And there’s another country, I’ve heard of long ago,  
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;  
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;  
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;  
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,  
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.*

