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MAGAZINE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

COVID-19 has dramatically changed the plans for 2020. In March we limited and then closed access to the Beechwood National Memorial Center. In April we had to take the step to close the cemetery grounds to the visiting public and have prioritized meeting families by phone or electronic communication. The decision to close the cemetery was not made lightly and was a necessary precaution. We value the understanding of the community during these challenging times.

The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation has either postponed or cancelled many events. We continue to look for ways to share history, celebrate the anniversary of specific events, as well as plan for when we reopen and can welcome everyone back to our grounds. We truly look forward to getting back to the new normal.

You'll notice that this issue commemorates the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland and all things associated with Dutch-Canadian Friendship and its history. We had planned for many events, partnered not only with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Canadian Tulip Festival, but with Veterans Affairs Canada, the Ingenium Group and Ancestry.ca. Most of these events will go virtual or have been postponed to 2021.

We are still sharing photos, stories and other interesting facts on Beechwood's Social Media pages. I encourage you to visit.

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

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to seeing you in the coming months when it is safe to do so. Please stay safe and healthy.

Note: This issue will only be a digital issue as we have decided not to print during the COVID-19 period.

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, Kéum Roling, Kita Szpak, Erika Wagner.

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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 of at: www.beechwoodottawa.ca

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

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COMMEMORATING AND CELEBRATING THE LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS

by Kéum Roling

*Senior Officer Communications & Public Diplomacy,
The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Canada*

CANADIANS PLAYED a pivotal role in liberating the Netherlands 75 years ago. In both the Netherlands and in Canada, Dutch people pause to reflect on how Allies, including many Canadians, made the ultimate sacrifices to liberate them from Nazi occupation. The Dutch people express their heart-felt gratitude and celebrate the fact that, since 1945, they have been living in freedom again.

May 4: Remembrance Day in the Netherlands

Ever since the end of the Second World War the Netherlands has been commemorating its dead on May 4th. As from 1961, on that date the victims of the Second World War are remembered, together with victims of other conflicts, wars and peacekeeping missions that have taken place since the outbreak of the Second World War. Thus, May 4th has become the Dutch equivalent of Remembrance Day, which is celebrated in Canada on November 11th.

The national observance of Remembrance Day (*Dodenherdenking*) in the Netherlands takes place on May 4th at 8pm. At that moment, two minutes of silence are observed throughout the country to commemorate the victims of war. A national commemoration ceremony is held on the Dam Square in Amsterdam in the presence of his Majesty the King and representatives of both the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Dutch Parliament. Simultaneous to this national observance of Remembrance Day in Amsterdam, all over the country local commemoration ceremonies in nearly every town and city in the Netherlands are taking place. Obviously, because of the present corona-crisis all of these ceremonies, including the national *Dodenherdenking* in Amsterdam, was scaled down. They were, however, streamed online. At 8pm, the entire country comes to a halt and is silent for two minutes. All over the country the Dutch national colors were flown at half-mast from dawn till dusk on May 4th.

Dutch Remembrance Day in Canada

This Dutch national remembrance is not only taking place in the Netherlands, but also abroad. Every year, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ottawa and the Consulates-General in Toronto and Vancouver commemorate the Canadians who gave their lives for the liberation of the Netherlands 75 years ago. In Ottawa, this commemorative service has always taken place on May 4th at 2pm. This is to make sure that, given the time difference between Ottawa and the Netherlands, this ceremony is taking place at exactly the same moment in both countries. This means that both in the Netherlands and in Canada we commemorate the more than



7,600 Canadians who died in the nine-month campaign to liberate the Netherlands simultaneously. We will never forget the tremendous sacrifice they made for the cause of freedom.

For several years, the Embassy has partnered with Beechwood Cemetery to celebrate its commemorative service at the National Military Cemetery. This takes place at the central monument, which is dedicated to the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who have served Canada with honor and distinction. It is indeed a beautiful and fitting location to hold this service, both with Canadians and Dutch people.

Celebrating and sharing freedom

Throughout the Netherlands, in many cities various commemorative and celebratory events were organized in memory of the liberation of these respective cities. While many events are being organized on the day the city was actually liberated, the biggest celebration takes place on Liberation Day (*Bevrijdingsdag*) itself, i.e. on May 5th.

This year, at 14 Liberation Festivals taking place throughout the country, the Dutch celebrated both the liberation and the freedom they currently enjoy. At the same time, attention was paid to the fact that in many countries of the world this freedom is not a given, or even absent altogether. At these Liberation Festivals, young people are reminded not to take their freedom for granted. Collectively, the 14 festivals that this year took place on May 5th have grown to become the largest single-day cultural event in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, the celebrations this year also had to be moved to television and online platforms. In light of the current situation, this is once more a poignant reminder of how precious our freedom is.

In Canada, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Consulates-General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Toronto and Vancouver as well as the Honorary Consuls have been giving out a commemorative pin that is the symbol of 'freedom' in the light of the 75 Years of Freedom initiative. The colors of the pin, red-white-blue, represent the colors of the Netherlands national flag. The pin design reflects a freedom torch and flame, and in the flame one can also see a peace dove. The handing out of the pin symbolizes the fact we have to 'share our freedom' and allows us to raise awareness of the importance of freedom. You can pass on this torch of freedom so the flame can keep burning.



THE OTTAWA CREMATION MEMORIAL

by Nicolas McCarthy
Director of Marketing, Communications
and Community Outreach

ADJACENT TO the Field of Honour in Section 27 where War Dead and Veterans are buried, sits a small stone building. This small building is an important early military memorial at Beechwood Cemetery.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission built the Cremation Memorial in 1958. It consists of commemoration panels set on an inside wall of a stone shelter building that was designed and built by Veterans Affairs Canada engineers. The Commission installed a Cross of Sacrifice in the centre of Section 27 in 1957 and a ceremony to dedicate the Cross of Sacrifice and Cremation Memorial was held in May 1959.

The Cremation Memorial commemorates 31 War Dead of the First and Second World Wars. The 31 War Dead commemorated on the Memorial were cremated in Canada and the United States and do not have a place of burial.

In 1971, the Cremation Memorial also displayed plaques to commemorate 28 Dutch War Dead whose graves are maintained by the Canadian Agency of the Commission on behalf of the Netherlands.



The two plaques read

1939 - 1945

IN HONOURED MEMORY
OF THESE OFFICERS AND MEN
WHO DIED IN CANADA
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND WHOSE MORTAL REMAINS
WERE COMMITTED TO FIRE

1940 - 1945

TER HERDENKING VAN DE IN CANADA
GEVALLEN NEDERLANDERS

Translation
In commemoration of the Dutch people
who fell in Canada

A Highlight of the Canadian Tulip Festival 2020 VETERANS DAY CEREMONY VIA TULIPTV

by Kita Szpak

Festival Coordinator, Veterans and Seniors

THE CANADIAN TULIP FESTIVAL was proud to present its annual Veterans Day Ceremony on May 12, 2020 at 11 a.m. at Beechwood National Cemetery. Viewers could watch the formal private ceremony on the Festival's TULIPTV channel.

The ceremony included a wreath laying to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands. The ties that the Festival has to the Netherlands are formidable. The Canadian Tulip Festival was established to celebrate the historic Royal gift of tulips from the Dutch to Canadians immediately following the Second World War as a symbol of international friendship.

The Festival preserves the memorable role of the Canadian troops in the liberation of the Netherlands and Europe, as well as commemorates the birth of Dutch Princess Margriet in Ottawa during World War II — the only royal personage ever born in Canada. Hence the importance of remembering this historic bond on the Tulip Festival's Veterans Day — particularly this Anniversary year.

To mark the occasion, the Festival also acknowledged and celebrated individuals from each of the three branches of the military who have served our country. This is the third year that an Honorary Veteran was selected from the Army, Navy and Air Force based on candidate submissions made to the Festival. All Canadian armed forces personnel, regardless of when time was/is being served, is eligible to stand as a candidate for submission.

Understandably, these are extraordinary times where many events and activities are being cancelled and postponed to a later date when people can gather together in celebration and commemoration once again. Even though the Canadian Tulip Festival and Beechwood National Cemetery would prefer to have had Veterans, dignitaries and the public attend Veterans Day to properly acknowledge the contributions service men and women have made to our country, it was unanimously agreed that a Festival ceremony — no matter how streamlined — should take place to honour all those who have served. The simplicity of the streamed event will only amplify its powerful significance for all of us.



THE LIVING TRIBUTE GARDEN IN BLOOM

ORIGINALLY PLANTED on June 6, 2019, for the 75th anniversary of D-Day, the Living Tribute Garden is an outward commitment to educate, teach and share the stories of the past and to ensure that the sacrifice of all members of the Canadian Armed Forces and allied nations is never forgotten. The Living Tribute Garden is a partnership between the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Canadian Tulip Festival, the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign, Veterans Affairs Canada and Beechwood Cemetery.

On October 1, 2019, the day commemorating the 75th anniversary of the start of the Scheldt campaign which led to the liberation of Holland and ultimate victory of the Allies, the Festival's special Liberation75 signature tulip was planted.

In May, this bright orange tulip with crown-shaped petals will be blooming to display proud support for the Canadian Armed Forces, while honouring the fallen Canadians of the Liberation of the Netherlands.



THE LIBERATOR OF THE NETHERLANDS — GENERAL CHARLES FOULKES

by Erika Wagner

Program and Fundraising Coordinator

NESTLED IN THE MIDDLE of the Veterans Section, in between the Cross of Sacrifice and the Dutch cremation bunker, resides not only a great Canadian but a military hero to the people of the Netherlands.

Charles Foulkes was born in England on January 3rd, 1903. After university, Foulkes joined the Canadian Permanent Force in 1926. At the start of WWII, Foulkes was a major with the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division. As he moved through the ranks, other famous Canadian Generals, such as General Henry Crerar, noted his outstanding tactical knowledge. In January 1944, he replaced Major-General E.L.M. Burns as General Officer Commanding the 2nd Infantry Division, a unit that was fighting in the Normandy Campaign. In November 1944, Foulkes joined the 1st Canadian Corps as General Officer Commanding, who were then fighting in the Italy Campaign.

By May 1945, with the suicide of Adolf Hitler and the successful Russian siege on Berlin, Nazi-Germany was starting to crumble on all fronts. On the 4th of May, Field Marshal Montgomery accepted the surrender of all German forces in Northwest-Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. However, there were fears that the German 25th Army would continue to hold out in the Netherlands, so its commander General Blaskowitz met with General Foulkes in Hotel de Wereld, in Wageningen. On the 5th of May 1945, they negotiated and signed a more detailed surrender document for all German forces in the Netherlands.

After the war, Foulkes was appointed the first ever Chief of General Staff (which was later changed to Chief of Defense Staff), which oversaw army demobilization and later preparations for the Cold War and the Korean War. Then in 1951, he became Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, where he persuaded the Diefenbaker government to accept the North American Air Defense Agreement (now known as NORAD) in 1957. He retired in 1960 and passed away in Ottawa on September 12, 1969.

This international hero is finally getting the recognition he deserves with the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation installing a Great Canadian Plaque next to his grave. There was a planned unveiling ceremony prior to the COVID-19 outbreak scheduled to be on May 5th. It would have marked the 75th anniversary of General Foulkes signing the historic surrender document.

Beechwood has opened the plaque to the public, however the official unveiling ceremony will have to wait until another date can be set.



Did you know?

Crerar and Foulkes are buried only one headstone apart in the Veterans section



Photos were taken by Nathan Pigeon