

Veterans Memorial Gardens + Interpretive Centre (VMG+IC)

Our Projects within a Project

veteransmemorialgardens.com

Who we are and our geographical region.

The Canadian Motorcycle Tourism Association (CMTA) is an Alberta registered Nonprofit Society with a charitable fundraising license. We are a volunteer organization and are responsible for creating and managing Veterans Memorial Gardens + Interpretive Centre (VMG+IC) at 10121-93 St., Grande Prairie Alberta.

Since 2017 when we started designing VMG+IC, we have raised over \$750,000 in grants, sponsorship and donations of materials, labour and equipment to create a place of education, remembrance and community.

Our outdoor living museum covers the geographical area from the east side of the MD of opportunity to the BC border and from just north of Grande Cache to the Northwest Territories border by telling the stories of some 240+ regional killed in action soldiers. We also tell the stories of soldiers who did incredible things and came home to become veterans.

veteransmemorialgardens.com



Our Facility

Located at 10121-93 St., Grande Prairie Alberta, VMG+IC is a half acre pocket garden with 8 themed gardens and an outer walkway Called “Oh Canada” that is broken up into national “stories” and pulled back to local and Regional.

Our outdoor living museum is complemented by a community centre with an indoor prep kitchen, restrooms, a museum display space that doubles as a meeting area and an outdoor community kitchen, along with a greenhouse, victory gardens and a fully companion planted garden.

Ideal for school field trips, community ceremonies or gatherings, VMG+IC is set to become the activity hub of the Hillside area in Grande Prairie.



Themed Interpretive Walkway Sections - “Oh Canada”

1. Residential Schools
2. World War One Internment Camps
3. World War One Conscription Crisis
4. World War Two Internment Camps
5. World War Two Conscription Crisis
6. World War Two POW Camps
7. The Battle of Kapyong and the Korean War

- 9) Metis Garden
- 10) Indigenous Garden
- 11) Loyal Edmonton Regiment "D" Company
- 12) Liberation Garden
- 13) Associations Garden, (Royal Canadian Legion, ANAVETS, Cadets, RCMP)
- 14) Soldiers of Suicide
- 15) Women of War
- 16) Animals of War



Our facility serves a wide variety of people.
Being accessible to all is very important to us.
We have explored the best options for making our facility accessible
and have identified that a wheelchair lift is the safest and most
economical ways to go.
The space to accommodate the lift has been incorporated into our
design.

Costs: \$29,950

- \$21,050 for lift
- \$8,900 for the double door that we need to accommodate wheelchairs safely.

**We have applied for an accessibility grant,
however, it was over-subscribed.
We are applying for funding from other
sources.**



Victory Gardens & Food Security

Our Association is now a member of Second Harvest and Food Rescue. We have two freezers that were donated to us by Giant Tiger and we have a commercial grade food refrigeration unit to accept food from Second Harvest and Food Rescue. We accept non perishable goods but only as required.

Many volunteers today are in a position where they have to choose between volunteering and the cost of food, gas and other staples. By providing our volunteers with some of the support they need, our association is able to keep stellar volunteers and with the abundance we obtain, we are able to support others within our community in the following order; veterans, seniors and single parents.



While we get some of the food stuffs for our hampers from Food Rescue, we also value add to our hampers.

If you would like to help us create well rounded hampers, or if you would like to apply for a hamper, forms are available at: VeteransMemorialGarden.com

ALSO - By lottery, gardening spaces and support to learn to garden are now available. If you would like to have a gardening space for 2021 - please fill out the form at: veteransmemorialgardens.com

The gardens are \$550 each at Home Depot. We will put plaques on each one to honour whomever sponsors them. We require 10 units veteransmemorialgardens.com



10 Victory Gardens

Freeze Drying Food

We'd like to purchase some Harvest Fresh Freeze Dryers to process leftover food. (Peavey Mart is the importer for these US machines.)

The machines are approx \$5,500 Canadian and can process 2,500 pounds of food in a year each. Freeze Dried foods have a 25 year shelf life, maintain 97% of their nutritional value, colour and texture.

Because freeze dried foods are lighter than hydrated foods it would make it easy for us to be able to impact hunger in communities where shipping costs would otherwise impede support. We've reached out to various food producer organizations and the interest in this type of service is there.

This will value add to local and regional farms and their offerings plus it potentially allows us to employ people.

We are actively looking for interested partners and would like to do a feasibility study to see how we can help veterans, serving soldiers and their families across our region with food security. The Grande Prairie Friendship Centre, the Legion and other volunteer based organizations like the Salvation Army would be good fits as partners.



Harvest Fresh Freeze Dryers + the processes benefits and value.

Outdoor Community Kitchen

veteransmemorialgardens.com

The outdoor community kitchen is meant to help us with a number of things.

1. We do not want smells of onions etc on objects made of fabric that are on the walls inside of the interpretive centre.
2. We want to host field trips and being able to feed those children is important when having them attend our facility.
3. We want to rent the facility out for family reunions, meetings and other such events.
4. We need a place to host ceremonies, educational, community and fundraising events

There is no ability to cook anything in the indoor prep kitchen, it is only meant as a place to prepare foods for cooking and serving, making hot beverages, keeping beverages cold etc. It will be connected to the outdoor kitchen by an intercom system.

We require the 2 x 6's, the spray foam insulation, shingles, siding, doors, pass through screened windows, electrical, adjustments to the hood and fan we have purchased and the skids the building will be built on. We have purchased used equipment from a local business and have a charbroiler, gas stove with oven, griddle and burners, 60" prep table/cooler and a 60" stainless workstation and sink already purchased.

We have already had a donation of the sheeting and subflooring for the building by NORBORD.

Remaining costs to build outdoor kitchen are approx.
\$8,000 in materials
+ \$4,000 in labour
\$12,000.00



Mural + Barn Doors for the Community Centre

Our building requires a sloped roof to shed snow to the back of the facility.

That half truss roof will create a 5' high space for us to install a tri service military mural.

We will also be able to install security cameras and solar lighting to mural on the sloped roof adding to the overall security of our facility.

On the front of the building where our double doors will go, we will need a barn door style enclosure to protect the doors from vandalism.

We'd like the barn doors to present a visual interpretation of the Canadian Flag with the CF logo in the middle. This way - at night, people will be able to understand immediately what this place represents.



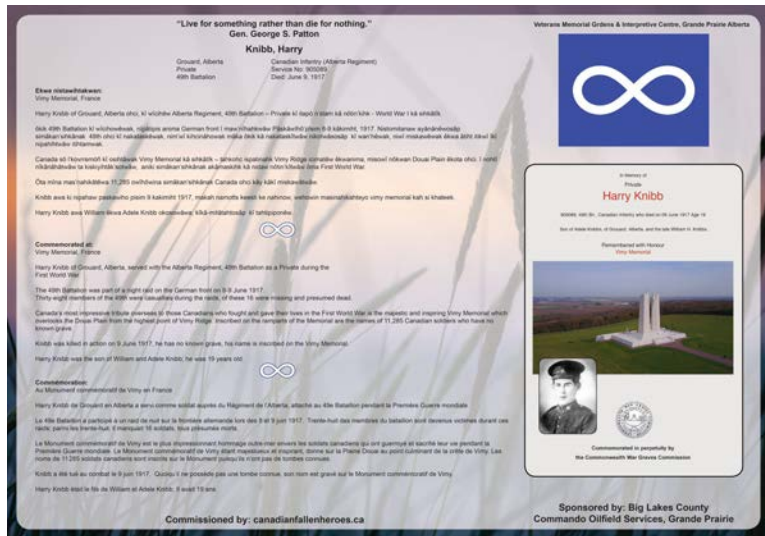
Program Delivery Building
Veterans Memorial Gardens & Interpretive Centre

Rough rendering of what the roof line and “barn doors” will look like.

Costs to accomplish the trusses, mural, lighting, security cameras: \$38,500

Costs to create the barn doors and wrap them: \$7,600

Service Panels + Education Kits - the Language Translation Mission



Above: Harry Knibb's story in Cree, English and French

BLeft: Operation: Coyote Teachers manual

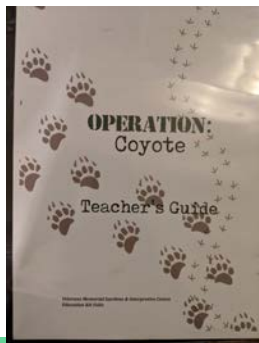
BCenter + BRight: Operation: NW AB Soldier

Reconciliation has become a big part of this ever evolving living museum. And not just reconciliation with our Indigenous + Metis people, but with the French, Ukrainian, Chinese and Japanese Canadians who were treated so poorly by the “ruling class” at the beginning of this experiment called Canada. Reconciliation comes in many forms. Ours is one of education. Teaching others of the hard stories of Canada’s beginnings is our way to reconciliation, admitting that these things took place. As we are able to identify soldiers and their ethnicities, it is our desire to translate the soldier’s story into their native language along with English and potentially French (If not already in French) to teach the world about how Northwest Albertan people have worked together as a tapestry of people of many languages and cultures for over 120 years.

We know that when children see people we deem as heroes, who look like them, sound like them, they start to dream about being like them.

We also know that children learn best in the language that they are most comfortable in. In our region, Cree, French and Ukrainian are spoken and there are schools that actively teach these languages. By having the stories of our regional Cree, French and Ukrainian speaking soldiers infused into our Operation: Northwest Alberta Soldier Education Kit thereby creating three new kits one for each language complete with appropriate bilingual language binders for teachers and activity guides for students. (English and Cree English and Ukrainian, English and French)

The Cost to translate varies by Language and project. Our education kits into Cree will cost upwards of \$70,000 Materials into French, \$10,000. Ukrainian \$10,000. There will also be object and artefact costs involved.



Education Kit Ambassador + Instructor

It is our desire to find a candidate that we can train to teach Operation: Coyote and Operation: NW AB Soldier to classes directly as an ambassador of our museum OR as a trainer to train the teachers on the wide array of education opportunities the kits actually contain.

We'd also like to run some day camp type programs that would involve the education kits and taking groups through the gardens in a structured walk about.

This person would be responsible for the booking of the kits, maintaining them and refurbishing them when needed (Costs to replace objects etc. to be reimbursed by museum)

The Cost of finding, training and paying an Education Kit Ambassador

- Ads and interviews to find candidate: \$1,500
- Training, \$3,500 - send to Edmonton for training and critiquing by the LER Museum Staff. (\$2000K to LER Museum, \$1,000 to candidate for wages and expenses) \$500 for artefacts and objects.
- \$2,000 per month + travel expenses during the school year.
- \$2,000 per month in the summer with meals paid for. (Working approx 100 hours per month)

Kit maintenance budget for the year (2 cases with 2 education kits each and 2 sets of objects for interacting with) \$500 per year per kit - \$1,000 - There are many opportunities for sponsorship with the Edu Kits



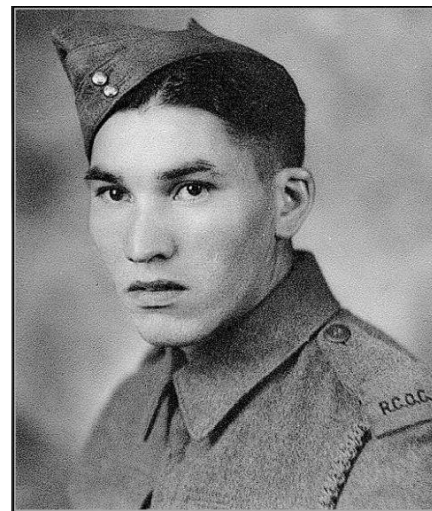
Metis Garden

In the Metis Garden, we intend to honour all of our regional Metis killed in action soldiers and their silver cross families.

Moreover, we intend to honour regional veterans not unlike Charles “Checker” Tomkins of Grouard Alberta. Born 8 January 1918, Corporal Charles "Checker" Marvin Tomkins enlisted with the Second Armoured (tank) Brigade of the Canadian Army in 1940. After arriving in England, he was recruited to participate in an exercise to determine which indigenous languages were strongest for developing code; Cree was the most successful. As a result, Cpl Tomkins and others were recruited to serve as "code talkers"; encrypting messages detailing Allied movements in the war. After the Second World War, Cpl Tomkins served an additional 25 years in the Canadian Forces, serving with Les Fusiliers de Sherbrooke, the Royal Canadian Service Corps, and Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

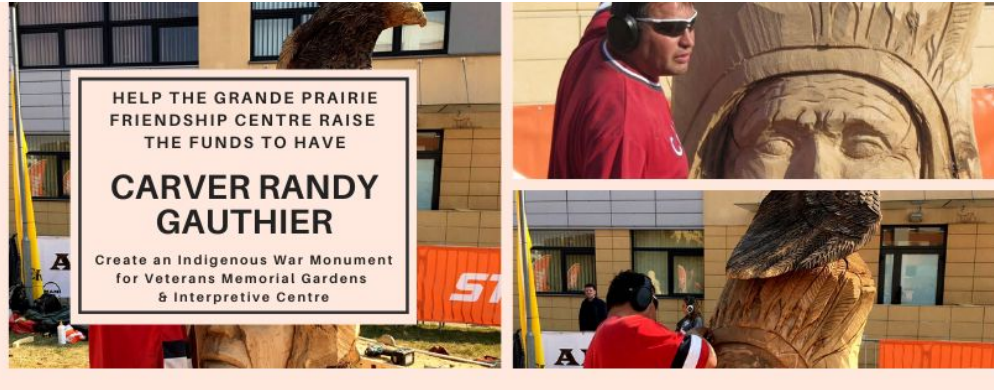
We are commissioning a “Dispatch Rider” carving by Rusty Barton who also is a chainsaw carver from Ontario, and he is going to create three as close to identical carvings as possible - one for our project in Two Hills - the Wayside Fallen Riders Memorial Park, one in Grouard, Charles’ home and one in Veterans Memorial Gardens + Interpretive Centre. The carving, shipping, install of all three is estimated at \$55,000.

We are working with the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre and Metis Nation of Alberta Local 1990 to determine the contents of the rest of the gardens. Nappaq Design & Construction, an Indigenous Owned Company has agreed to help us with the construction of various pieces in the Residential School, Metis and Indigenous Garden.



Charles “Checker” Tomkins

Indigenous Garden



This sculpture is being fund raised for in partnership with the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre.

We are working with the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre and local Chiefs and councils to determine the contents of the garden. Nappaq Design & Construction, an Indigenous Owned Company has agreed to help us with the construction of various pieces in the Residential School, Metis and Indigenous Garden.

The Indigenous veterans and killed in action soldiers garden will have a chainsaw carving of a replica of the Aboriginal War Monument in Ottawa created by award winning Indigenous chainsaw carver Randy Gauthier from Chetwynd BC.

Mr. Gauthier has been commissioned to create his own magnificent version on the iconic statue. We are applying to Veterans Affairs for some of the costs of this carving but we will require another \$12-\$16,000 to have it delivered and anchored in the gardens.

We are working with the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre and looking to our Indigenous community to help us with the creation of the rest of their garden to ensure that the regional history is told accurately.

Soldiers of the Drum

Soldiers of the Drum is a mini documentary series that features stories of regional Metis and Indigenous soldiers, those killed in action and those who came home to become veterans.

Our partnership with CIA Solutions has allowed us to create three mini docs: St Germain, Poitras & Hardisty and we look forward to creating many more.

Each mini documentary costs \$20,000 to create.

veteransmemorialgardens.com



Loyal Edmonton Regiment “D” Company + Army Training Base 132

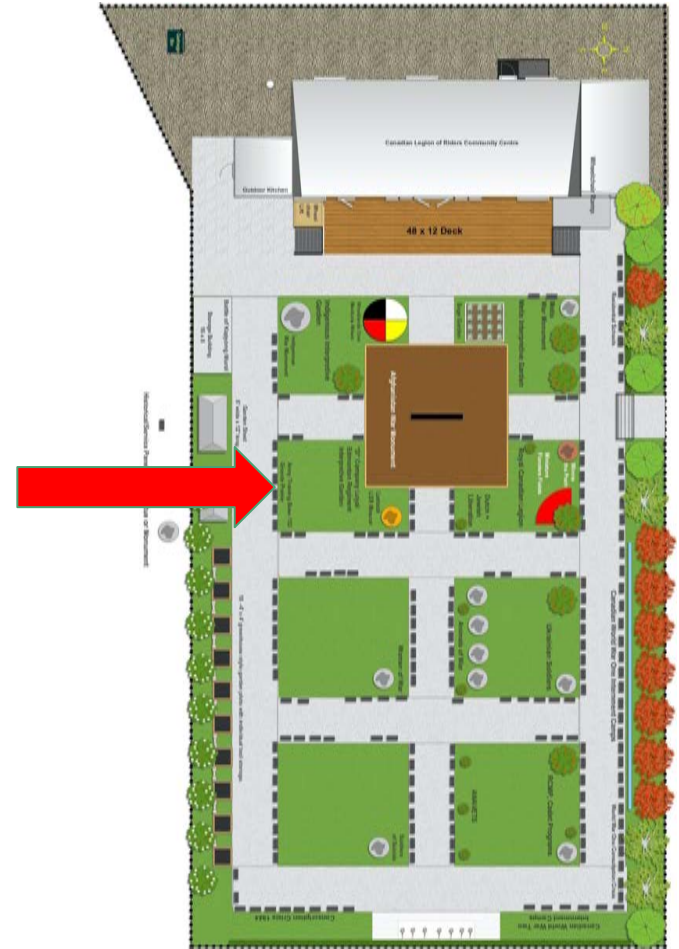
NW AB, Region 1 of AB/NWT Command of the RCL has at this moment in time, 24 Killed in Action regional and local soldiers who were Loyal Edmonton Regiment. We have the research on them thanks to our ongoing working relationship with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum, we have the place to place their stories, now we need the funding to tell all of their stories.

The writing, the layout and printing of the panels themselves, the pedestal fabrication, powder coating and the work to anchor them into the interpretive garden all needs to be accomplished.

We are turning to the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Advisory Council and our treasure trove of 49'er Magazines to tell the story and to help guide us in the design and content of the interpretational garden.

We are also building relationships with the other museums and the Royal Canadian Legion branches throughout the region.

The pedestals and storyboards for the 24 KIA's alone are \$40,000. We estimate the interpretive garden and it's permanent displays will cost \$75-80K to complete.



Liberation Garden

Liberation, the very word lets one know that Freedom is not Free.

- The Liberation of Holland has created a very special bond between Canada and Holland.
- The Liberation of Paris
- The Liberation of the Jewish and the closing of Auschwitz.
- The Liberation of Poland and how Communist Soviet Union, their liberators, further enslaved the Polish people.

These are just some of the topics that the Liberation Garden will cover.

At this moment, there is no partner and no specific costing plan for this garden.



The Netherlands

Associations - Cadets- Legion-ANAVETS - RCMP

As we can raise the funds, we intend to tell the stories of our 18 regional AB/NWT Command Region 1 Legions, the ANAVETS Unit 389, our Regional RCMP, and our Cadet Corps.

These gardens will slowly evolve over the course of the next two - three years.

We have the various associations sending us their stories.

The plan for this garden is taking shape but there are no costing or design plans in the works as of yet.

There are no funding partners as of yet for this garden.



**Corporal Donald Archibald
Harvey**

June 23, 1967

Grande Prairie, Alberta

Soldiers of Suicide

It took the determination of Lise Charron of the Canadian Army Veterans Motorcycle Units to ensure that soldiers whose battles followed them home and overwhelmed them are remembered in Canada's Military Cemetery, "Beechwood".

This will be a garden of quiet reflection with an eternal light burning to help chase the demons away.

The plan for this garden is taking shape but there are no costing or design plans in the works as of yet.

There are no funding partners as of yet for this garden.



Women of War

The Women of War Interpretive garden will tell the stories of our many regional women who went to war as nurses, medics, mechanics, administrators and more.

It will also tell of our regional War Brides.

Our region has some incredible stories to tell and in the years to come, tell them we will.

We have no specific costing plan for this garden as of yet, however working in conjunction with South Peace Archives on this project will be vital.



**Fonds 259 War Brides Collection,
South Peace Archives**

Animals of War

This interpretive garden will compliment the Operation: Coyote Educational Kit.

It will honor the lives of animals who fought and still fight with and support the Canadian Armed Forces personnel.

This garden will eventually be filled with sculptures of the various famous animals like Winnie the Pooh and Lestock of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment.

We have no specific partners or costing plan for this garden as of yet.



Lestock, the Coyote Pup
Loyal Edmonton Regiment
Military Museum

“Oh Canada” Walkway - Residential School Garden

There is a correlation between Residential Schools and Service.

The NW AB region had 6 recognized residential schools.

We also had a very high sign up rate by our regional Metis and Indigenous people.

We intend to tell the stories of these schools and how they influenced hundreds of regional soldiers to enlist.

In this section of walkway we intend to honor those who did not survive the residential school system and those who did.

We are working with a number of committees including the Orange Shirt Day campaign to tell these stories.

We are looking for a funder for this \$90,000 Permanent Display.



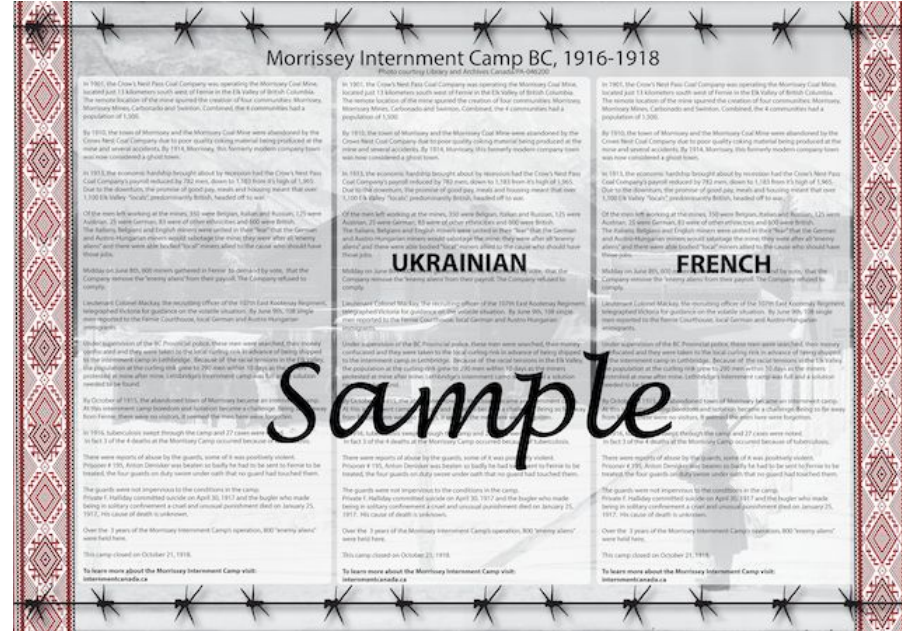
“Oh Canada” Walkway - World War One Internment Camp Garden

Working with the Canada World War One Internment Recognition Fund, we are going to be building 3 educational kits as well as 26 storyboards and a 56' mural in the permanent interpretive display that will make up a portion of the “Oh Canada” Walkway.

This permanent interpretive display will discuss the courting of Ukrainian farmers to come help Canada produce a great food supply but when war hit, the land they had been given was stripped from them and they were interned in work camps.

It is largely because of the internees of these camps that Canada has a National Park System.

The cost of this project is over \$300,000



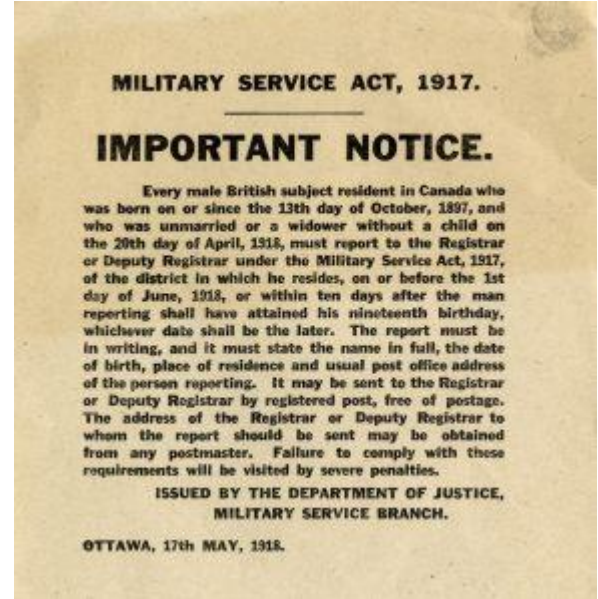
“Oh Canada” Walkway - World War One Conscription Crisis

Prime Minister Robert Borden over promised the aid that a young Canada could provide to the Great Britain and the Allied forces. He also considered French speaking Canadians to be slackards when in fact they were scared to enlist because they could not speak English and were afraid to be punished for not following orders well.

Not to mention, in spite of potential recruits saying that they wanted to fight under French speaking commanders, the Canadian military did not have very many French speaking officers and few were advanced. The devastation of the French and English speaking Canadian relationship starts with Robert Borden. Conscription was only part of the horrors that Robert Borden envisioned on our country, he held the most racist political election in Canadian History, to date.

We intend to tell these stories as a permanent Interpretive display of between 6 and 8 storyboards.

We will be looking to our French Canadian community for partners when we are ready to tackle this part of the “Oh Canada” Walkway.



“Oh Canada” Walkway - World War Two Internment Camps

12,000 Canadian Japanese, 60% Canadian born, 77% Canadian Citizens interned, a further 10,000+ registered with police

600 Italian men interned with a further 31,000 registered with police

16,700 Germans interned

2,300 German and Austrian Jews, interned

We intend to apply to the National Association of Japanese Canadians to plan and fund this Interpretational collection when we are ready to proceed with the research and work for this project.



**NOTICE TO ALL
JAPANESE PERSONS
AND PERSONS OF
JAPANESE RACIAL ORIGIN**

“Oh Canada” Walkway - World War Two Conscription Crisis

Although deeply opposed to conscription, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King found himself in a position where it was the only way to relieve troops on the front line.

“Mackenzie King had displayed what the Canadian historian Colonel John A. English called "an abiding aversion to conscription" and "an apparently unshakable conviction in the efficacy of appeasement" as he regarded another world war as "the ultimate catastrophe" for which no price was too high to avoid.” (Wikipedia)

We have no specific costing or funding model for this part of the “Oh Canada” Walkway.



“Oh Canada” Walkway - Canadian Prisoner of War Camps

World War Two, like its predecessor, saw Canadian politicians make some truly horrific decisions.

The Prisoner of War Camps caught up innocent Jews, and according to the Canadian Encyclopedia:

“More than 34,000 combatant German POWs were held in Canada during the Second World War. The camps in Medicine Hat and Lethbridge were the largest in North America, vastly outstripping the largest camp in the United States, which held 15,000 POWs by comparison.

Once captured, all combatant prisoners were held in Canada under the supervision of the British government. Most were returned to partitioned Germany following the war.”

We have no costing determinations made for this permanent Interpretive display at this time.



[An internment camp for Japanese Canadians in British Columbia, 1945.](#)
[LAC](#)

Image: Jack Long / National Film Board of
Canada/Library and Archives
Canada/PA-142853.\r\n

“Oh Canada” Walkway - Battle of Kapyong + the Korean War

The Korean War is often referred to as Canada's Forgotten War. More than 26,000 Canadians served in Korea, and 516 died during the conflict and the third deadliest in Canadian history.

Night Action in Kapyong by Scott Taylor of Esprit de Corps Magazine and Holding Kapyong by Ernst Zuber are the two pieces of National War Museum licensed art that create this magnificent tribute.

Local soldier and veteran Jack Shield's story is also told here.

Our mural is sponsored in part by SpeedPro Grande Prairie, Jack's portrait has been created by Kim Webber of Whiplash Airbrushing in Sexsmith AB.

The C Can that the mural adorns is sponsored by Jack Shields son, Clarence Shields, owner of Blackjacks Roadhouse in Nisku Alberta.



Contact Us

Renee Charbonneau DStG
Executive Director, CMTA
Project Lead,
Veterans Memorial Gardens + Interpretive Centre

780-933-0182

exec.director@motorcycletourism.ca

www.veteransmemorialgardens.com