

**Speech for MC – Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Louis Cyr**  
**Unveiling Ceremony - 1 Nov 2025**

**Around 12:53**

Ladies and gentlemen, please take your seats.

Mesdames et messieurs, veuillez prendre place.

In a few moments, you will witness a fly over to celebrate the start of this ceremony. It will consist of one Chinook helicopter from the Royal Canadian Air Force. We also had two Griffon helicopters planned, but they are now on standby for humanitarian assistance due to Hurricane Melissa.

Dans quelques instants, vous assisterez à un survol aérien qui marquera le début de cette cérémonie. Un hélicoptère Chinook de l'Aviation royale canadienne effectuera le survol. Deux hélicoptères Griffon étaient également prévus, mais ils sont actuellement en alerte pour déploiement d'aide humanitaire en raison de l'ouragan Melissa.

**After Fly Over**

**Land Acknowledgement**

We recognize that we are on the traditional homeland of the 'A-nish-in-ah-bay', 'Hoe-den-oh-show-nay', and the Huron-Wendat, and thank these nations for their care and stewardship over this shared land.

We also recognize the proud military traditions of the Indigenous Peoples across this great land of Canada, and provide thanks to those who have valiantly served, and who continue to serve, within the Canadian Armed Forces.

**MC Welcome**

Your Worship, Mayor Bryan Paterson, distinguished guests, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen, Good Day!

Monsieur le maire Bryan Paterson, distingués invités, membres des médias, mesdames et messieurs, bonjour!

I'm LCol (retired) Louis Cyr, secretary/treasurer for the National Wall of Remembrance Association. I have the distinct pleasure, and it is truly a privilege of being the MC for this ceremony.

Today is a very special day, the fruit of many years of work. The National Wall of Remembrance Association Board of Directors, current and past, would like to kindly thank you for attending this ceremony.

Aujourd'hui est une journée très spéciale, fruit de nombreuses années de travail. Le conseil d'administration de l'Association de la Muraille commémorative nationale, actuel et passé, vous remercie chaleureusement de votre présence à cette cérémonie.

Before we start, just a couple of administrative points.

-The ceremony schedule is included in your brochure. We also have French versions available. Si vous en voulez une, veuillez lever la main SVP.

-If required, right behind you, is the Richardson Bathhouse where you will find washroom facilities.

-During this ceremony, there will be photographers, videographers, and a drone operator who will walk about, so just smile and be happy!

-Talking about drone operator, I would like to recognize Colonel (retired) Mike Hill. Mike, with the *nom de guerre* Aerosnapper, is a concerned individual interested in recording change for historical purposes. With his drone and camera, Mike has spent countless hours of his time *pro bono* capturing the construction progress of this memorial from start to finish. Many of his images and videos are depicted in the 'Construction' tab of our website, with many more to be added following this ceremony. Thank you, Mike.

### **O'Canada and raising the flag**

Ladies and gentlemen, please stand (if you can) for our National Anthem and the raising of the Canadian Flag.

Mesdames et messieurs, veuillez vous lever (si vous le pouvez) pour notre hymne national et la levée du drapeau canadien.

RCMP Inspector (retired) Gary Coulter, our Chairman, and Col (retired) Bruce Ewing who served for 39 years in the Canadian Armed Forces, and who is currently our vice-Chairman, will raise the flag while the Canadian Military Wives Choir Kingston sing our National anthem.

### **After the O'Canada**

Please be seated

Veuillez vous asseoir.

### **Thanking music and reenactors**

Before we proceed with the unveiling, I would like to recognize the excellent music from The Princess of Wales' Own Regiment Foundation Pipes and Drums, and the Canadian Military Wives Choir Kingston.

J'aimerais profiter de ce moment pour féliciter la performance musicale du Princess of Wales' Own Regiment Foundation Pipes and Drums, et la Chorale des épouses de militaires canadiens de Kingston.

Also, a big thank you for all the reenactors who are giving, with their presence, a special historical touch to this ceremony.

Un grand merci également à tous les reconstitueurs qui ont donné, par leur présence, une touche historique particulière à cette cérémonie.

### **Unveiling**

We will now proceed with the unveiling of the kiosk and the four pillars.

Nous allons maintenant procéder au dévoilement du kiosque et des quatre tours.

### **Kiosk**

For the unveiling of the kiosk, I would please ask our guest of honour, General (retired) Walt Natynczyk, His Worship Mayor Bryan Paterson, and Gary Coulter, our Chairman, to please come forward and stand by the kiosk.

If I could draw your attention to what we refer to as The Welcoming Kiosk. Here at this entrance point, visitors will have an opportunity to see a short description of the memorial and the story behind it. For your convenience, the text etched on the kiosk is also printed in the brochures you received today.

### **Unveiling of the kiosk**

*Gentlemen, please unveil the kiosk.*

The kiosk bronze relief was created by local artist Silvia Pecota (Silvia, where are you, say hello!) who is also a professional photographer. Her collaboration and artwork, including the brochure in your hands, and also the allegories on each of the pillars have been exceptional and greatly appreciated by everyone involved. The detailed and historically accurate kiosk bronze relief depicts soldiers from three eras in the traditional “ Rest On Arms Reversed” position, as seen in your brochure.

Le bas-relief en bronze du kiosque, détaillé et historiquement précis, représente des soldats de trois époques différentes dans la position traditionnelle « armes renversées », comme on peut le voir dans votre brochure.

### **Pillars unveiling**

I would now kindly ask for the individuals who will unveil the four pillars to please come forward and take your position along the walkway.

### **Pillars’ general introduction**

As you will see, the pillars each commemorate an era or event in our history as a Nation. More specifically, the pillars themselves and the individual images engraved on the granite surfaces, have been designed and selected to honour and recognise the commitment and sacrifices made by our fellow Canadians, past and present.

At the base of each pillar, is a stylized figure, accompanied by a single word. These words are: Service, Sacrifice, Honour and Mourning. But these are more than just words. Together, they form the theme and foundation of this memorial.

À la base de chaque tour se trouve une figure stylisée, accompagnée d'un seul mot : Service, Sacrifice, Honneur, et Deuil. Mais ce sont plus que de simples mots. Ensemble, ils forment le thème et le fondement de ce mémorial.

The images etched into these stone pillars are intended to remind us of those who lived the events of our history, from long before Confederation up to and including those who serve today.

You will see, at the top of each of the twelve panels, a small maple Leaf. This symbol of Canada is modeled after a similar leaf which adorns the crosses and grave markers, for thousands of Canadians buried in foreign lands. This emblem links the panels and pillars together, under one principle that is: "In the Service of Canada".

Each panel of each pillar also bears a QR code, which when accessed, takes you to our website, where visitors can learn more about the conflicts represented and the individual images. This site also provides additional links to other resources such as Archives Canada, the Canadian War Museum and the eight Books of Remembrance.

### **Pillar One**

The first pillar will be unveiled by Al Jones - the founding President of the National Wall of Remembrance Association who was on the Board of Directors from 2010-2020; Cathy Sharpe, vice-President Operations for iMedia Northside in Nepean, Ontario, the publishing company for our Remembrance/Souvenir magazine through which we raised all the funds for this project; and Captain (retired) Debra St-Gelais, the only original member of our Board of Directors to see the project through its 15 years.

*Please proceed with the unveiling*

Our first pillar highlights events preceding the First World War. Beginning with a painting, selected to commemorate a comprehensive treaty signed in 1701 at Montreal.

Notre première tour met en lumière les événements précédant la Première Guerre mondiale. Il commence par un tableau choisi pour commémorer un traité global signé en 1701 à Montréal.

The treaty, often referred to as “The Great Peace of Montreal” ended decades of conflict between First Nations and European allies.

Though First Nations’ history long precedes this important event, this painting was chosen as a starting point, bridging the shared history of Europeans and First Nations, to be honoured equally in the theme of this memorial.

From here, the panels on this pillar advance through Canadian history, marking key events such as The Plains of Abraham, the American siege of Quebec, The War of 1812, and later, the Northwest Campaign. Worth a special mention, is the painting on the centre panel showing “The Battle of Kingston Harbour”. This notable event took place in the waters directly behind us, anchoring this location quite firmly to our history.

Some of these figures, are giants of our past: Tecumseh, Brock, Wolfe and Montcalm, but there are thousands of others, less well known, who should not be forgotten.

## **Pillar Two**

The second pillar will be unveiled by Jennifer Demitor, architect and owner of Fabricae Architecture and Art Ltd, here in Kingston, who designed this absolutely magnificent memorial; Jonathan Clarke, our amazing General Contractor from Mascon Restorations, also from Kingston, and without whom, we would not be admiring this splendid memorial today; Sean Stoyles, Research Manager, Canadian Development Consultants International, who provided their expertise with the image selection and scripts; and Larry Brooks, one of our Board directors, who led the committee to select the pillar images and scripts, a colossal task.

*Please proceed with the unveiling*

This pillar is devoted entirely to the events of the First World War from 1914 to 1918. As a young nation, Canada called upon men and women from across the country to pick up the torch and serve.

Cette tour est entièrement consacrée aux événements de la Première Guerre mondiale. Jeune nation, le Canada a appelé des hommes et des femmes de partout au pays à reprendre le flambeau et à servir.

More than 650,000 Canadians answered the call. Roughly one tenth of our population at that time. Ypres, Somme, Passchendaele, and of course Vimy Ridge, became familiar names and benchmarks to nationhood and international recognition. The pictures selected for this pillar serve to remind us of the human costs, almost unimaginable today. 66,000 Canadians never returned home and a further 172,000 lived with wounds for the rest of their lives. **Their stories are remarkable:** The people of Newfoundland, although not a members of Confederation at the time, suffered hugely disproportionate losses in the Somme offensive, losing over 700 young men in the first minutes of the battle. A tremendous blow for the small close-knit communities they left behind, but one shared, in varying degrees, by almost every, city, village, town and family in the nation.

And this war was different: For the first time -- Canadian Nurses, known as 'Bluebirds' pictured on this pillar, shared the hardships of conflict and suffered combat casualties on the front lines, while others were lost at sea, as depicted in the poster shown on the side panel.

The courage and commitment of these Canadians have not faded over time, and it is our responsibility to ensure it never does. This pillar is a bookmark, reminding us to look deeper into our history, and the stories of the fallen, to keep their memories alive and better understand, and appreciate, the sacrifices they made on behalf of our country.

### **Pillar Three**

The third pillar will be unveiled by Bart Loria, one of our Board directors, who chairs our Scholarship Programme; Cassandra de Bartok, another Board director, who serves as our webmaster; and Joel Watson, Board director, our resident historian who assists with our Education Outreach programme. Also helping to unveil the pillar is Heather Goodsell, President and Owner of PG Memorials, also known as Picture This on Granite, from Stanstead, Quebec, whose team created and laser etched pretty much everything you see here today: pillars, kiosk, benches, and compass rose. We insisted that the stone must come from Canada; it was provided by their vendor partners in Saint-Sébastien, Québec.

PG Memorials is an internationally recognized company with numerous memorials in Canada and across the USA. Heather was telling me that this project is the largest and most beautiful they've ever done in Canada.

*Please proceed with the unveiling*

The pictures etched on these stones, speak to another generation of Canadians who endured the hardships and dangers of the Second World War.

Les images gravées sur ces pierres parlent d'une autre génération de Canadiens qui ont enduré les difficultés et les dangers de la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

More than one million, soldiers, sailors, air crew, nurses and merchant mariners, saw active duty between 1939 and 1945. From Hong Kong to Dieppe – Sicily to Antwerp and of course, Juno Beach on D-Day; Canadians answered the call.

For those who served – the war was long and arduous. These few images remind us of those lost at sea, and in the skies over Europe. The harsh conditions endured by prisoners of war in Southeast Asia and the intensity of stepping off a landing craft in Normandy. These panels also honour the chaplains, nurses and medics who cared for the wounded, under the worst of conditions, risking, and at times losing, their own lives in the process.



On one of the side panels we see sailors, stranded on the stormy seas in a small life raft, hoping for rescue, that for some never arrived, reminding us of the crucial work of the Merchant Navy and the perils of convoy duty in the North Atlantic.

Visitors will also see, a famous photograph, popularly known as “Wait for Me Daddy” showing a young boy running after his father, who is marching away on the streets of New Westminster, BC. Images like these can serve to remind us that the families of the men and women who served also made sacrifices and often endured loss.

There were also lesser-known incidents closer to home that history might be tempted to overlook – such as the sinking of the Canadian ship, SS Caribou. It was torpedoed by a German U- Boat in the Cabot Strait between Nova-Scotia and Newfoundland, with the loss of 137 souls, including nurses, wounded soldiers and crew. The front-page headlines pictured here, remind us that tragedy and loss was not always limited to distant shores.

This pillar is dedicated to the memory of the 45,000 Fallen of the Second World war - fellow Canadians who will always deserve our respect and honour. Separated from us by generations, but forever a part of our community.

#### **Pillar Four**

The fourth and last pillar, will be unveiled by three members of our Board of directors: Colonel (retired) Bruce Ewing, our Vice-Chairman; Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Bill Cummings, the Chair of our Education Outreach Committee, and me, Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Louis Cyr, Secretary /Treasurer.

This pillar recalls the conflict in Korea, The Cold War, Peace Keeping operations, and Afghanistan. While not yet born and thus we did not participate in the Korean War, the three of us, like many other veterans present here today, served during the other three timeframes which this pillar represents. As such, this pillar, out of them all, especially resonates with us all.

*We'll now proceed with the unveiling*

While the hardship and losses of the First and Second World Wars cannot be overstated, these events, from 1945 to the present, were no less traumatic for those involved.

Cette dernière tour évoque le conflit de Corée, la Guerre froide, le maintien de la paix et l'Afghanistan. Si les souffrances et les pertes des Première et Seconde Guerres mondiales ne peuvent être surestimées, ces événements, de 1945 à nos jours, n'en ont pas moins été traumatisants pour les personnes impliquées.

26,000 Canadians supported the United Nations Command in Korea, over the course of three years, from 1950 to 1953. The Korean War Book of Remembrance, in Ottawa, records 516 names of those Canadians who never made it home. Many more were wounded, and others suffered, less visible, but no less severe traumas. One needs only look at the face of Private Heath Mathews, pictured on the centre panel, to understand – even fleetingly- the effects of what he endured. An image like this may help us see Mathews and his companions, at a more personal level; young people who volunteered to serve their country, a son or brother, simply not a little-known soldier from a long-ago war. The same holds true for the 130 Canadians taken from us while on active duty with Peace Keeping missions around the world: Including nine air crew, shot down over Syria, and remembered on this panel with an image of a Buffalo aircraft, similar to the one they were flying on the day of the tragedy. **They – all of them**- are more than just names from the past.

The second panel also commemorates the hundreds of Canadians who lost their lives during the Cold War. That these losses were often accidental, occurring on routine patrols, training flights or accidents at sea: in no way, this diminishes the sorrow of their families or the valour of their individual commitment to our nation.

The final panel, memorializes our soldiers, engaged in the more recent conflict in Afghanistan. The painting titled “ Fallen” at the top, was selected by the Veterans who unveiled this pillar for you today, each one of them saw active duty in Afghanistan and for them, the scene captured the memory, and emotion of the moment.

The last two photographs engraved on these panels are very well known to Canadians. Most of us will recall seeing the somber “Ramp Ceremonies”, marking a soldier’s final journey home.

And: what more could be said about our last image than this. It’s called “**The Highway of Heroes**” for good reason. Canadians, pictured here, gathered, quite spontaneously, to pay their respects and bid farewell.

This picture and the story behind it should serve to remind us how, and why, we stood together at that moment. Pausing to acknowledge and respect someone we probably never knew, who gave everything on our behalf.

With your permission I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Peter Fisher, the photographer who took that picture and who is here with us today. Please, Peter, stand up.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, this concludes the unveiling portion of our ceremony. We hope that these paintings, photographs and sculptures will always serve to remind us of the people who lived our history and the sacrifices they made.

We would like to point out to you that when you go forward to more closely examine the pillars and images, please also note the four benches placed for people to sit and reflect. Each has a separate quotation, specifically chosen by our Board of directors, that honours our Fallen.

## Speeches

I would now invite our guest of honour, General (retired) Walt Natynczyk, former Chief of Defense Staff from 2008 to 2012, and who recently volunteered to become a Patron for our association, to say a few words.

J'invite maintenant notre invité d'honneur, le général (à la retraite) Walt Natynczyk, ancien chef d'état-major de la Défense de 2008 à 2012, et qui s'est récemment porté volontaire pour devenir mécène de notre association, à dire quelques mots.

Thank you very much, General Natynczyk for such a poignant and heart-rending address for our Fallen.

Merci beaucoup, Général Natynczyk, pour ce discours si poignant et émouvant pour nos canadiens tombés au combat.

His Worship Bryan Paterson, Mayor of Kingston, and whom, as of today, will become custodian of this memorial that the National Wall of Remembrance Association hereby gifts to the city, will also say a few words.

Son Honneur Bryan Paterson, maire de Kingston, qui, à partir d'aujourd'hui, sera le gardien de ce mémorial que nous offrons par la présente à la ville, prononcera également quelques mots.

Thank you very much, Your Worship, for your kind words and for being such a great host in the very first capital of Canada.

Merci beaucoup, Votre Honneur, pour vos aimables paroles et pour votre excellente hospitalité dans la toute première capitale du Canada.

I would now invite Gary Coulter, our Chairman, to say a few remarks.

J'invite maintenant Gary Coulter, notre président, à prendre la parole.

Thank you very much, Gary / Merci beaucoup, Gary.

## **Thanking the contributors**

As mentioned by Gary, a project like this one does not start as a vision and become reality without the great efforts of many people and the involvement of various companies. Throughout the ceremony, we mentioned a few, but there are many more: Rick Leduc, owner of Leduc Electrical, from Kingston; Brock Tye, owner of Extreme Landscaping, from Elgin; Manuel Sousa, owner of Sousa Ready Mix, from Kingston; WSA Light Energy Design from Ottawa. Also, a special mention for Gordon Barr Ltd, from Kingston, who saved us tens of thousands of dollars by providing their heavy equipment free of charge. Once again, we thank you all sincerely for your contribution with making this memorial such a wonderful commemorative tribute to the Fallen.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the city of Kingston and Parks Canada for allowing us to build this memorial on this prominent and historical piece of land.

Furthermore, we sincerely thank Mayor Paterson who personally made the motion in support of this project on 9 July 2019, which was carried unanimously by City Council. Many city staff and departments have spent a considerable amount of time and effort on this memorial, and we thank you all for your contribution. In particular, we would like to recognize Jennifer Campbell, who, for almost three years, spearheaded in a most effective manner city hall's involvement with this project. Upon her appointment as Commissioner Community Services, Kevin Gibbs, Director Heritage Services, took over. We genuinely thank you both for your continued support and your advice over the last 6 years. Jennifer, Kevin, please stand.

## **Save The King**

Ladies and gentlemen, please stand (if you can) for the Royal Anthem - God Save the King.

Mesdames et messieurs, veuillez vous lever (si vous le pouvez) pour l'hymne royal, God Save the King.

## **Conclusion**

As a final note for this memorial, I strongly urge you to come visit it at night, as the lighting gives it a totally different and more somber perspective to commemorate our Fallen.

Also, if you plan to look at the memorial today, please try to keep to the walkway and stay off the new grass that was just laid 2 days ago.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, this concludes our unveiling ceremony for the new National Memorial to the Fallen. We would like to sincerely thank you for your participation today. As indicated in the brochure, a reception will follow at the Fort Frontenac Officers' Mess for invited guests.

Distingués invités, Mesdames et Messieurs, ceci conclut la cérémonie d'inauguration du nouveau Monument commémoratif national aux Canadiens tombés au combat. Nous tenons à vous remercier sincèrement de votre participation aujourd'hui. Comme indiqué dans la brochure, une réception suivra au mess des officiers du Fort Frontenac pour les invités.