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Canada 

 

# Past event helped to define a nation

April 9th marks a significant date in the history of this country. The date represents skill, teamwork, passion, drive and so much more. On April 9th, 1917 more than 15,000 Canadian infantry began the assault at Vimy Ridge.

In France, the Germans were in the hill, where they had defeated the British and the French numerous times, surrounded by trenches and tunnels. Over 200,000 had lost their lives and it was time for Canada to take it.

The Canadians planned for their upcoming battle; soldiers were trained to load and fire on German artillery, so they could use weapons found on the ground; special tasks, such as grenade throwers, rifle men and machine gunners were handed out; soldiers trained on a mock up hill of the area they would be facing.

All four divisions of the Canadian Corps advanced together for the first time to take the ridge. Three days of fighting ensued and in the end, the Canadians seized more ground, guns and prisoners than any other British attempt. The Canadians did suffer with casualties; 3598 were killed and about 7000 wounded.

In 1922, the French Government gave Canada

## Comment

by Michelle Minnoch

Vimy Ridge, and the land surrounding it (250 acres of land). The memorial took 11 years to complete at a cost of \$1.5 million; the base is made up of 11,000 tonnes of concrete, and the figures 5,500 tonnes of stone. Carved on the base are the names of the 11,285 Canadians missing, or presumed dead. The memorial, which has recently undergone restoration, was unveiled by King Edward VIII on July 26, 1936. The restoration, headed by Veterans Affairs Canada, is comprised government ministries, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, and other groups who specialize in military history.

Many believe the victory at Vimy Ridge is a milestone for Canada, defining time in the history of our country. Along with dignitaries from Canada, 3598 Canadian students will be at the overseas ceremony, one representing every soldier who was killed in the battle. Each student

has created a tribute in poem, essay, painting or song form, to the soldier they are chosen to represent.

This fitting tribute to the Canadian soldiers who lost their lives, especially with the students participating, will be covered on various Canadian television stations throughout the next couple of days, as well as CBC Radio. Take the time to watch some of the ceremonies, recognizing our countries strength, solidarity, and resilience.

Flash forward: Afghanistan 2007. Eugene Melnick, owner of the Ottawa Senators, flew into the Canadian base in Kandahar recently to make a special delivery. Armed with \$50,000 worth of goods for the soldiers, he landed with what any hard working Canadian would want in Afghanistan on a day off; jerseys, sticks, and other ball hockey equipment needed for a little hockey. Now that's a gift I sure will keep on giving when there's time off, and you're missing home.

By the way, they played an American team when they got there new equipment – our soldiers beat them 9 – 0.

# Council should think before passing by-law

## Letters From Our Readers

Dear editor,  
I am against the new by law the town is

thinking of passing, My brother lives in Alberta and comes down here to visit with us in his motor home.

They Stay one to two weeks. I am a veteran of WW2 and my brother served 25 years in the service in peace time and this is the way the Town of Innisfil is treating the veterans who

served to keep this country a good and save place to live. I was always thought it was a free country but I guess I was wrong. I hope council will give this a great deal of thought before passing this by law, but I am not holding my breath.

Norman Dent  
Innisfil

Dear editor:

Enough is enough!!!! I have lived in Alcona now for 12 years. I have seen my road paved, town water/sewers put in, new town dock, new rec. center and town office etc.! I didn't say word one because I felt these where improvements and I absorbed the costs and tax increases. This proposed by law of no motor homes or boats on your own property is the

last straw. Remember the pole tax in England rebellion! This proposed by law while be fought tooth and nail! Lets waste more tax dollars on court battles and by law enforcement officers. I moved from Mississauga to get away from this sort of thing. Do not tease the tiger!! He bites!

Sincerely,  
Shane Smallman

## 11,000 smokers will get free supply of patch

More help is on the way for local residents who want support to quit smoking with the announcement that the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is making nicotine replacement therapy available by phone to 11,000 Ontario residents.

"The demand is definitely there," said Jen Tonn, a public health nurse with the tobacco program at the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. "Our Health Connection phone line was ringing non-stop over the past few weeks screening people for the 10 STOP Smoking and free NRT Workshops held locally this week.

"Many smokers looking for support to quit were disappointed the workshops filled up so fast. This is a second opportunity to get free NRT in the form of the patch for a six-week period."

But Tonn cautions that people should move fast before this study fills up as well. Daily smokers ready to quit can call the STOP Study at 1-800-350-5305. The call centre will be open 24 hours a day until 11,000 people are registered.

All callers will be screened for eligibility and once registered will receive a six-week supply of the patch, delivered by mail. They can then get further

support by calling Smokers' Helpline, the telephone counseling service offered by the Canadian Cancer Society.

In a similar mass distribution study in 2006, CAMH provided NRT to more than 13,000 Ontario residents to support them to quit smoking.

"It's no secret most people who smoke would like to quit," said Tonn. "If you are truly ready to give it a try call the STOP Study and get involved. NRT has been shown to double the chances of success among smokers who feel they can't quit cold turkey and need support to succeed."

## Former South Simcoe MP dies

A former federal Member of Parliament for much of South Simcoe has died.

John Roberts, who represented York-Simcoe as a Liberal between 1968 and 1972, died in Toronto from a heart attack last Friday.

The Hamilton born Roberts defeated Progressive Conservative former Senator Wallace McCutcheon in the 1968 election which saw the election of Pierre Trudeau.

The York-Simcoe riding then consisted of the townships of Innisfil, West Gwillimbury and Tecumseth along with the village of Cookstown and the town of Bradford. It also included King, Vaughan and East Gwillimbury townships and Stouffville.

Conservative Sinclair Stevens defeated Roberts in the 1972 election.

Roberts then contested the downtown Toronto riding of St. Paul's in 1974 which he held until he was defeated by Barbara McDougall in 1984. He failed in an attempt to return to Parliament in 1988 when he ran in the Ontario riding north of Oshawa.

He held a variety of cabinet portfolios including Minister of Employment and Immigration, for Science and Technology and Environment.

During his three year term as Environment Minister, he was particularly vigorous in his fight against acid rain which eventually led to the Acid Rain treaty.

Liberal Party leader Stephane Dion said, in a statement Monday, that Roberts "impassioned defence of the environment contributed to raising awareness and taking steps to limit emissions of air pollutants like sulphur dioxide that cause acid rain."

A gifted academic who earned a doctorate from Oxford University, he went back to teaching and worked as a business consultant after politics.

A memorial service is planned for May.

## Easter Egg-stravaganza at County Museum today and Thursday

The Simcoe County Museum will host their Easter Egg-stravaganza on Wednesday, April 4th and Thursday, April 5th.

The sights and sounds of Spring come alive as we celebrate Easter. From 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., there will be games and activities for all ages.

Enjoy games such as Bowling for Bunnies and Tip the Tulip. Make an Easter basket and even become a bunny for the evening!

Easter Egg-stravaganza is an evening for the whole family. Admission is \$2 per person, and children must be accompanied by an adult. Organized groups are required to register in advance.

The Simcoe County Museum is located at 1151 Highway 26 West, Minesing, just 5 minutes north of Barrie. For more info, call the Simcoe County Museum at (705) 728-3721 or e-mail museum@county.simcoe.on.ca.