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Export date: Fri Oct 30 3:47:01 2026 / +0000 GMT

Remembrance Day

2014 marked a significant milestone in our military history as it is 100 years since the beginning of WW1. As a Dominion of Britain at the time, Canada was there from the beginning supporting our Allied Forces. When the battles ended in 1918, we had earned the respect of our allies and the rest of the world. Indeed, our military sacrifices and accomplishments earned Canada a seat at the League of Nations. This was the first multinational organization whose objective was to maintain world peace and was also a pre-curser to the United Nations.

It is important that we take a few moments on November 11th to show our appreciation for those who have served and continue to serve as members of Canada's military.

You can show your support by wearing a poppy. Poppies that are available from the last Friday in October until November 11th have been worn as a symbol of remembrance in Canada since 1921. Across Canada and overseas, the Royal Canadian Legion reports that more than 18 million poppies are distributed. The Poppy Campaign uses the donations it receives to provide support to ex-service members and their families.

The cenotaphs located throughout Dufferin-Caledon memorialize the names of those who once called our communities home and made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Recently, I attended a rededication ceremony in Shelburne for their cenotaph which now includes the Afghanistan mission. Additionally, I was honoured to attend the Orangeville Legion's rededication ceremony of the Memorial at the Veterans' Plot located in the Forest Lawn Cemetery.

Our communities in Dufferin-Caledon hold a number of Remembrance ceremonies. Caledon East holds a service on November 2nd and the Alton Legion and the Bolton BIA service is November 9th. Ceremonies on November 11th include Shelburne, Orangeville, Grand Valley and Mansfield. I encourage everyone to take time to attend one of our local services.

As I will have the honour to lay the provincial wreath at a number of events in Dufferin-Caledon, I will be taking time to thank veterans for their personal service and sacrifice. This time of year reminds us that it is important to remember our Canadian Forces members who have faced threats, and continue to face threats, both here at home and abroad. This Remembrance Day, we struggle to understand the senseless murder of two military men. One, an off-duty Warrant Officer with 29 years of service, who was struck down in parking lot in Montreal. The other, a 24 year old reservist who was shot as he stood as a ceremonial guard at our National War Memorial. The tragic deaths of WO Patrice Vincent and Cpl Nathan Cirillo is a reminder that our freedom that was so valiantly fought for 100 years ago, continues to be challenged by those who would seek to threaten all that we hold dear.

Please take time this November 11th to remember and honour all of those who chose to fight for our freedom. Lest we forget.

By Sylvia Jones MPP