

Tales of Animals in War



The Road to Peace

"Arf! Hey everybody, my name is Gandy the dog. My Remembrance Clubhouse friends and I are setting up our Heritage Fair project in the school gym. We are calling it the 'Road to Peace.' Did you know that it has been 100 years since the end of the First World War?"

"Yes, back then they called it the Great War. People believed it would be the war to end all wars but, unfortunately, it was not. Sadly, there have been many other conflicts since then," cooed Squeaker the pigeon.

"Over the years, different countries have had arguments—just like people do. However people sometimes decide to fight wars when they cannot think of better ways to settle their differences," neighed Bonfire Jr. the horse.

"Canadian soldiers have often travelled far from home to try to restore peace," Simone the cat mewed. "We are so proud that our men and women in uniform have helped

others live peacefully together," trumpeted Ellie the elephant.

"Unfortunately," growled Win the bear, "this can be a very difficult goal to achieve. There are still conflicts in troubled lands around the world. Canada is sometimes called upon to help stop those who are acting like bullies and taking away the human rights of others."

"Over the years, we clubhouse members have visited many of the places where Canadians and animals have served," barked Gandy. "For our project, we have each brought in something to remember these travels. We realized on our journeys that thousands of Canadians have risked their lives on threatening waters, in dangerous skies and on harsh battlefields, fighting for peace and freedom. We also learned that there are serious consequences to war."

"For more than a century, Canadian service members have been travelling on the 'road to peace' and standing up for freedom. But our

project is trying to show that this path is rarely easy and peace is fragile, neighed Bonfire Jr. "Thankfully, we have the ability to make a better world, and it starts with each of us! By helping others, being kind and working together, we can make a positive difference one person (or animal!) at a time."

How will you help peace grow in your family, school or community?



A red flower to remember

When we decided our Heritage Fair project would be about the “Road to Peace,” I immediately knew what object I would contribute—a bright red poppy, the best-known flower of remembrance. It seemed a perfect way to honour my ancestor, Bonfire the horse, and his friend, Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae. They served together in Europe during the First World War when John was a medical officer with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He tragically lost a close friend during a battle in 1915 and was inspired to write *In Flanders*

Fields. This moving poem refers to the little red flowers that grew among the soldiers’ graves. Sadly, John died in January 1918. He was one of the over 66,000 brave Canadians who gave their lives in this brutal conflict.

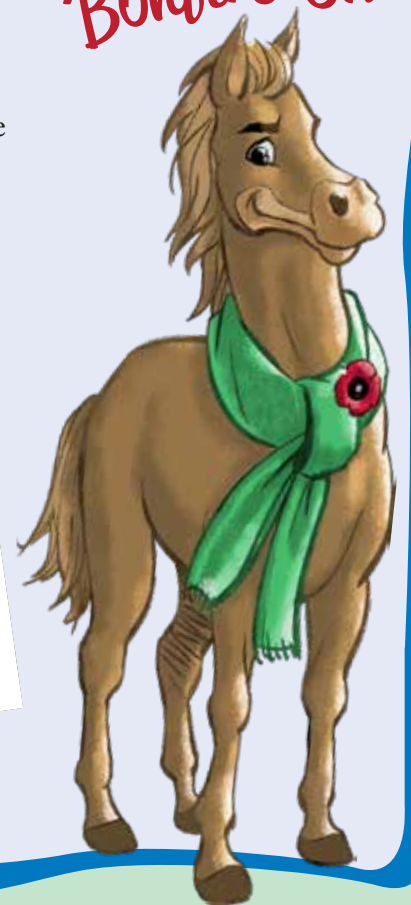
This year is very special, as the world will mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War on November 11, 2018. Around the globe, people will wear a poppy to show they respect those who served and died in the cause of peace and freedom. I will bow my head during the moment of silence and will remember the famous

words Lieutenant-Colonel McCrae wrote: “In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow, between the crosses, row on row....”



Poppy in a field.
Photo: DND

Bonfire Jr.



Remembering their last steps



Purr! I brought in an antique life preserver from a warship for our Heritage Fair project because I love naval history. Did you know that in times of war, cats like me served on ships as mascots?

They also helped the sailors by catching rats onboard so they would not nibble on the men’s important food supply.

Back in the First and Second World Wars, hundreds of thousands of Canadians sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to serve overseas. Recently, a wooden archway called “The Last Steps” was built as a special memorial on the Halifax waterfront. Dozens of boot prints are burned into the boardwalk leading up to it. They symbolize the last steps of the many soldiers who never returned home to set foot again on Canadian soil.

Over in Europe, there is a similar memorial called “Canada Gate” that also has boot prints burned into the walkway. The village of Passchendaele, Belgium, was chosen as the site because more than half of Canada’s First

World War dead lie in the surrounding area known as Flanders. Both the arch and the gate honour the tens of thousands of Canadians who died many years ago and remind us of our commitment to always remember them. Lest we forget.



“The Last Steps” Memorial in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
Photo courtesy of Ken Hynes

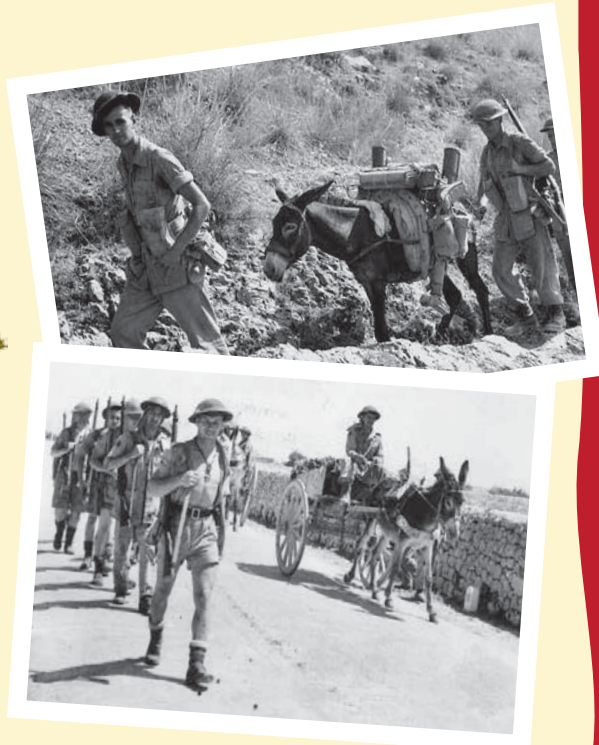
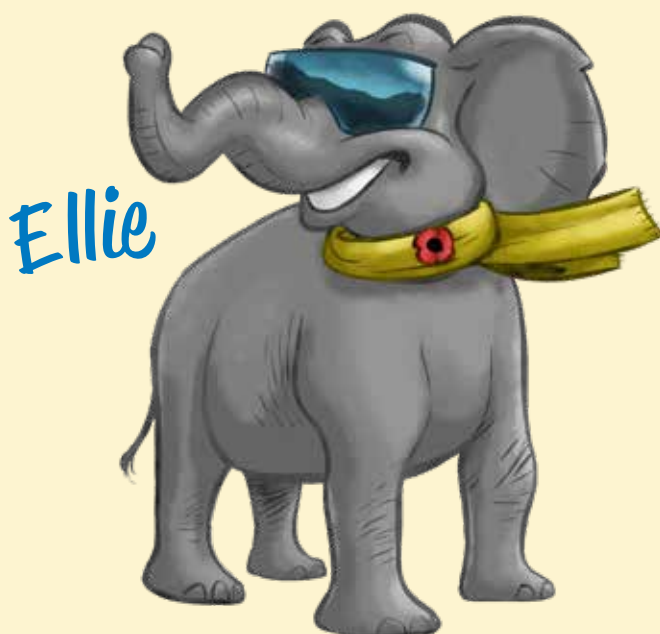
A heavy load to carry

As a great big elephant, I know all about carrying heavy loads! 75 years ago, Canadian soldiers began fighting in Italy during the Second World War. Italy has a very old culture that goes back many thousands of years. Battling there was compared to fighting inside a massive museum because there were so many historic buildings and old works of art.

It was difficult for our soldiers. The enemy was tough and the land was mountainous. In such a rugged environment, using trucks to transport supplies was often not possible so horses, donkeys and mules helped save the day. Their strong backs and sure footwork on steep, rocky paths helped deliver what our soldiers needed to be able to fight. Sometimes our soldiers would also jump on the animals’ backs to rest their weary human legs.

More than 93,000 Canadians saw action in Italy between the summer of 1943 and early 1945. Sadly, almost 6,000 of them would lose their lives. Many pack animals also died. The object I contributed to our Heritage Fair project is an old horseshoe, just like the ones worn by

many of these brave beasts during the war. From one strong animal to so many others—I trumpet their accomplishments!



Canadian soldiers in Italy.
Photos: LAC PA-129781 and PA-163669

Facing off in Korea



Gandy

Woof! You'll never guess what I found for my special object for the Heritage Fair...a hockey puck from the Korean War! Believe it or not, Canadian soldiers played hockey during the conflict.

You see, the fighting lasted three long years from 1950 to 1953. Life was hard for the more than 26,000 Canadians who served there. Our men had to face tough battles, but they also spent a lot of time watching and waiting outdoors through all kinds of weather—even during the winters that could be as cold as ours in Canada! Brrr. That might be why the soldiers decided to play hockey on the frozen Imjin River when they were not on duty. I bet playing the good old Canadian game helped them

warm up and feel a little less homesick.

July 27, 2018, marked 65 years since an agreement was signed to stop the fighting there. Korea remains divided today, however, as North and South Korea. Earlier this year, the world witnessed

how sport can bring people together when the two countries competed as one team at the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang. That is why this puck is more than a symbol of remembrance for me... it is also a hope for peace.



Canadian soldiers playing hockey on the Imjin River during the Korean War.
Photo: LAC PA-184478

Friendship at the fence



Corporal Justin Frye and his friend, Amir, in Bosnia.
Photo courtesy of Justin Frye

Squak! I am a fan of all things that fly. Not just birds, but also aircraft... especially helicopters. I love their thump-thump-thump sound. Kids like them too, including Amir Bajramovic.

When he was a boy in the war-torn country of Bosnia in the mid-1990s, Amir lived near a fenced-in United Nations base. He enjoyed watching helicopters taking off and landing and would often come to the fence to get a better look. He also became friends with a Canadian soldier named Corporal Justin Frye who was serving there. The two would often talk and it was a nice distraction from the war. The soldier brought Amir treats like candy, pencil crayons or paper that he would pass through the fence to brighten his day. I brought in an old photo of the two friends for the Heritage Fair.

When Corporal Frye returned to Canada, he often wondered what happened to the boy. He

thought he would never see Amir again, but after many years he tried to find him. Thanks to social media, the two reconnected. Since then, Justin and Amir (now a man) have been texting and have plans to meet again—this time with no fence between them!

Squeaker



Women and war

Win



Did you know that women have played important roles in our military over the years? During the South African War and the First World War, Canadian women served as Nursing Sisters. In more recent times, however, they have come to work in all areas of the Canadian Armed Forces.

When Canadians served in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2014, a number of women were doing the same jobs as men like driving trucks, flying warplanes, repairing engines, serving on warships, tending

wounds and patrolling on foot. They were brothers and sisters in arms. More than 40,000 Canadian Armed Forces members bravely served in

Afghanistan. Sadly, 158 of them died in the cause of peace and freedom there, including four women.



Canadian Armed Forces member greeting a child in Afghanistan.
Photo: DND AR2008-Z139-16

For our Heritage Fair project, I brought in these courageous women's remembrance dog tags. When I wear these tags, I think of them and all the Canadians who have risked their lives for our protection, at home and overseas.



Hey Teacher!

Interested in learning materials about women in the Canadian military?



and SEARCH
"Lest we forget her."