

Tales of Animals in War



Liberation of the Netherlands

"Hey everyone! Here I am with my Remembrance Clubhouse friends in the country of the Netherlands all the way over in Europe. We are at the Holten Canadian War Cemetery for their annual Christmas Eve candlelight ceremony," woofed Gandy the dog. "We are so proud to be here. Did you know that candlelight ceremonies are a special way that the Dutch people show their thanks to the Canadian troops who liberated them from German occupation during the Second World War?"

"Yes, it's true!" neighed Bonfire Jr. the horse. "For many years, Dutch school children have come to this war cemetery on the evening of December 24th to place candles on the graves of the Canadian soldiers who are buried here. Isn't that an amazing tribute? Tonight, the flames of more than 1,350 remembrance candles will softly glow throughout the cemetery. We feel so honoured to be here to see it."

"It was so special to see all those young students placing candles on the graves. It made my feathers ruffle!" squawked

Squeaker the pigeon. "It's so nice that they are looking after our Canadian soldiers who are buried in their country."

"All of us in the Remembrance Clubhouse have had the chance to meet Canadian Veterans of the Second World War over the years. Some of these brave men and women are more than 95 years old now! Unfortunately, the Canadian soldiers buried at Holten never had the opportunity to grow old. They died during the Liberation of the Netherlands in 1944-1945 and are buried here," Win the bear growled sadly. "We remember the sacrifice made by all those who served."

"The Dutch keep this special candlelight tribute tradition because the people in the Netherlands want to thank our Canadian soldiers for their freedom," purred Simone the cat. "You might wonder what freedom means? It's like being able to choose who your friends are, where you can go, what books you can read or the movies you watch. People in the Netherlands during the war had many restrictions on what they could do. Their freedom was taken away and many people

even lost their lives. Fortunately, 75 years ago, Canadians came to help their country."

"It's important to remember that many Canadians fought and died for freedom and to thank them. Candlelight tributes like this are one way to express our gratitude!" trumpeted Ellie the elephant. "There are also many other ways to remember and we have taken part in some of them ourselves over the years. We have visited many war cemeteries, attended colourful tulip festivals and watched sunrise ceremonies. We have even participated in special running and walking activities to honour those who served. We can't wait to tell you more about our remembrance experiences!"



An Indigenous Sunrise Ceremony

We are lucky in Canada to have a society with so many remarkable cultures. This definitely includes the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples whose roots in our country go back thousands of years. Many brave Indigenous men and women have served in



An Indigenous dancer at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial.
Photo: Veterans Affairs Canada

the military. So it makes sense that their proud traditions can be seen in special remembrance ceremonies.

The Remembrance Clubhouse animals went to France in April 2017 for the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge—a major Canadian victory during the First World War. It was there early one morning when we saw our first sunrise ceremony. This powerful tradition is part of many Indigenous cultures and is a chance to give thanks, reflect or pray. Since then, we have been lucky to see other Indigenous commemorative events during milestones like the

75th anniversaries of D-Day and the Italian Campaign, as well as the 100th anniversaries of the Battle of Passchendaele and Canada's Hundred Days. The participants use their own languages and wear traditional clothing as they take part in cultural activities like smudging rituals, symbolic pipe smoking, singing, dancing and drumming.

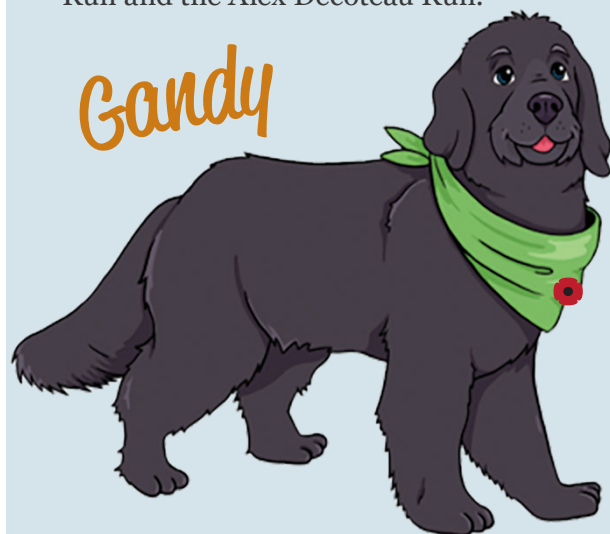
As I watch, my hooves always gently tap along with the beating of their drums and I can't help swishing my tail as the dancers gracefully move. Each time I promise myself again that we will always remember those who fought for our freedom. And I will always be grateful that Canada is such a great and diverse country.



Bonfire Jr.

Running to Remember

Woof! Many of you probably know that dogs love running in circles chasing after their own tails. If you had one, you'd understand just how much fun it is! But I also like to run to keep fit. Since I became a member of the Remembrance Clubhouse, I've also started to take part in races to remember those who served in uniform. Two of my favourites are the Canada Army Run and the Alex Decoteau Run.



The annual Canada Army Run held in Ottawa is a unique way to remember. Canadian Armed Forces members and the public all run together. It's a chance for the troops to thank Canadians for their support and an opportunity for Canadians to say thanks to the men and women who serve them in so many ways at home and overseas. It's a cool experience, and all participants receive a "dog tag" medal at the finish line.

Alexander Decoteau, a Cree from Saskatchewan, became Canada's first Indigenous police officer and competed as a runner in the 1912 Olympics. He joined the Canadian military during the First World War and served as a battalion messenger, running to deliver important communications across the battlefields. Tragically, Private Decoteau was killed in October 1917 during the Battle of Passchendaele. In his memory, remembrance runs are now held in Canada and Belgium. Why not organize an Alex Decoteau Run at your school?



Top: Alexander Decoteau in 1912.
Photo: City of Edmonton Archives EA-10-2072

Bottom: Alexander Decoteau winning a race.
Photo: Provincial Archives of Alberta

Blooms of Friendship

Being a cat, I love prancing around the garden. Flowers smell SO nice—they make me purr! Last fall, many schools across Canada participated in a "75 Years of Freedom" tulip planting project. Tulips are a symbol of the international friendship between Canada and the Netherlands that blossomed during the Second World War.

It was a very difficult time for the Dutch people during the war. Canadian soldiers went to help them but, sadly, more than 7,600 Canadians died in the effort to free the Netherlands. The Dutch

have never forgotten this sacrifice and have sent Canada thousands of tulip bulbs every year since then as a colourful gift of thanks. They bloom each spring in our capital city of Ottawa!



Tulips blooming on Parliament Hill.
Photo: Chelsea Smith, courtesy of the Canadian Tulip Festival

To recognize the 75th anniversary of the liberation of their country, the Kingdom of the Netherlands helped organize a special Canada-wide school tulip activity. Many ceremonies took place last fall as students carefully planted the bulbs of remembrance. I knew that those

flowers would bloom this spring when the weather warmed up. I took a walk around my neighbourhood and found some beautiful garden beds of tulips in schoolyards. One of them even had a little sign calling it the "Dutch-Canadian Friendship Garden!" What a beautiful way to remember.



Turn to Busan

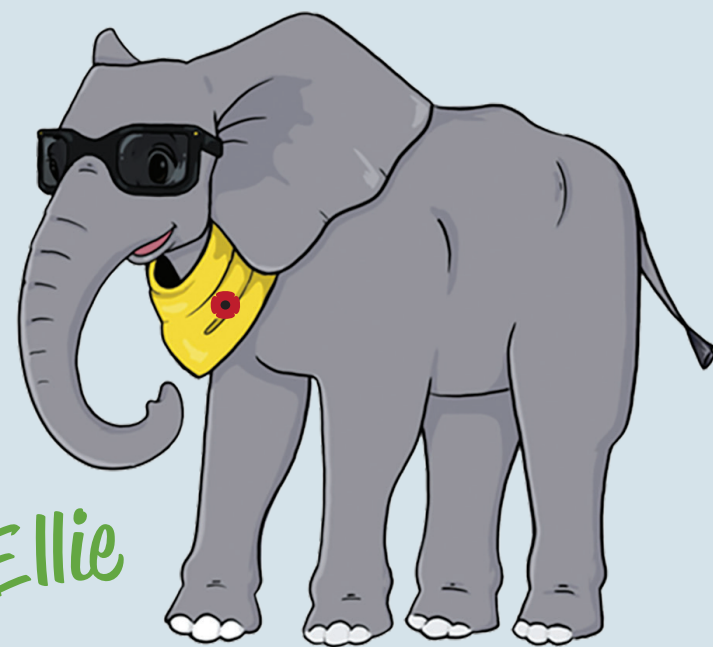
Did you know that some people have called the Korean War the “forgotten war?” But I am an elephant and elephants never forget so I take pride in knowing some facts about it. The Korean War started in 1950. The United Nations asked our country for help to try to stop the fighting. More than 26,000 Canadians would travel far

from home to serve in Korea. Sadly, 516 Canadians died during the three-year conflict. More than 375 of them are buried in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan, South Korea.

Canadian Veterans have done a lot to try to teach others about the Korean War. A great example is Vincent Courtenay who helped create not one, but two identical sculptures honouring those who died in the conflict! One is located in Korea and the other is in Ottawa. The memorial in our nation’s capital is placed to point exactly to its twin memorial in Busan.

To recognize the sacrifices made in the Korean War, Vincent Courtenay helped establish a special “Turn to Busan” ceremony in 2007. Every year since, around Remembrance Day, people in South Korea gather for a ceremony in the war cemetery in Busan. At the same time, people in Canada and other

nations that participated in the Korean War also gather. Even thousands of kilometres apart, people from around the world come together for a moment of solemn remembrance. It makes me trumpet my trunk in pride. What a powerful way to make sure the “forgotten war” is forever remembered.



Ellie



Top: Monument to Canadian Fallen in Ottawa.
Photo: Veterans Affairs Canada

Bottom: Turn to Busan ceremony at the Ottawa City Hall, November 2014.
Photo: Veterans Affairs Canada

Bear in Mind

I was in Edmonton last November and I witnessed a ceremony organized by a group called No Stone Left Alone. Since 2011, people have gathered in cemeteries to do a simple, yet



Win

powerful gesture—lay a poppy on the gravestone of a Canadian who served in the military, to show that they are remembered.

The goal is simple—encourage Canadian youth to visit the graves of Veterans. The beginnings were modest, with only a handful of students involved, but in 2019 more than 12,000 students laid over 60,000 poppies in communities across Canada. Wow, that’s impressive and the numbers are growing! What moves me the most in the events organized by No Stone Left Alone is how involved and interested students are in remembering our Veterans. When they lay their poppies on the headstones, students read aloud the name of the Veteran. It helps make a personal connection.

Bears like me are big and strong, but seeing young students laying poppies touched me deeply. This year, ask your teacher to get involved and you, too, could bear a hand and help spread remembrance in your community.



Remembrance ceremony at Beechmount Cemetery in Edmonton in 2019.
Photo: Gord Deeks

Soaring over the Highway of Heroes

There are so many ways to remember Canadians who have served in the military over the years. I am always amazed by the many powerful war memorials in cities, towns and villages across our country.



The Highway of Heroes in November 2007.
Photo: Department of National Defence TN2007-0761-03

But one of the most amazing things I have ever seen is the Highway of Heroes.

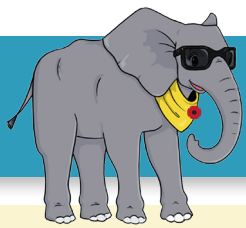
This stretch of Highway 401 in eastern Ontario is where Canadians who have died overseas often travel after being returned to our country. The fallen soldiers arrive at the airbase in Trenton and are then respectfully driven to Toronto before being sent on to their final resting places. More than 40,000 brave Canadian Armed Forces members served in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014—the largest military mission since the Second World War. Sadly, some 158 of them died during these efforts in far-off Southwest Asia.

I remember one time flying above the Highway of Heroes when four Canadian soldiers who died in Afghanistan were taken home to be buried. There were so many people standing on the sides of



Squeaker

the road and on the overpasses to offer their respects as the official cars drove past. Police officers and firemen saluted and Canadian flags were flying at half-mast. It made me so sad but also proud. Canadians will always remember the men and women who served and died in Afghanistan. And we will also remember those who continue to protect our peace and freedom today.



Newspaper Activities

WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Below is a list of words found in this year's newspaper. Fill in the blank squares with the word that fits each clue. Then, use the letters in the highlighted squares to solve the statement at the bottom.

EDMONTON - COURTENAY - TULIP - AFGHANISTAN - ALEXANDER - INDIGENOUS

- Country where Canadians served from 2001 to 2014.
- Place where Win witnessed a "No Stone Left Alone" ceremony.
- First name of a Cree runner and soldier from Saskatchewan.
- Flower of friendship for the Netherlands and Canada.
- People who led a sunrise ceremony at Vimy Ridge.
- Last name of Veteran who organized the "Turn to Busan" ceremony.

A Canadian war cemetery in the Netherlands.



Word search



E	C	A	N	D	L	E	L	I	G	H	T	G	W	T	I
M	E	T	I	S	R	N	O	V	E	R	S	E	A	S	G
F	R	E	E	D	O	M	A	E	D	M	O	N	T	O	N
M	E	D	A	L	E	E	G	T	U	L	I	P	R	A	P
N	M	Q	W	N	J	M	H	E	A	D	S	T	O	N	E
P	O	P	P	Y	O	O	I	R	M	I	W	H	O	M	E
O	N	E	T	H	E	R	L	A	N	D	S	G	P	T	I
L	Y	X	B	O	J	I	T	N	I	M	N	Q	S	E	C
I	O	T	S	L	O	A	S	S	F	L	A	G	G	V	R
C	F	Y	C	T	E	L	L	M	S	U	N	R	I	S	E
E	B	N	J	E	R	E	M	E	M	B	R	A	N	C	E
B	U	S	A	N	M	R	O	F	I	L	U	V	U	R	D
O	L	Y	M	P	I	C	S	A	D	O	E	E	I	F	H
A	B	C	I	N	D	I	G	E	N	O	U	S	T	G	I
B	E	L	G	I	U	M	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y

BELGIUM	BLOOM	BULB	BUSAN	CANDLELIGHT
CEREMONY	COMMUNITY	CREE	EDMONTON	FLAG
FREEDOM	GRAVES	HEADSTONE	HOLTEN	HOME
INDIGENOUS	INUIT	MEDAL	MEMORIAL	MÉTIS
NETHERLANDS	OLYMPICS	OVERSEAS	POLICE	POPPY
REMEMBRANCE	SUNRISE	TROOPS	TULIP	VETERANS

Crack the code Coded messages are often used in wartime to keep important information from falling into enemy hands. Solve the equations below and then match the number to the proper letter to break the code.

Code key

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
O	H	R	B	T	M	W	Y	D	N	I	U	E

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
S	C	L	J	X	P	F	V	A	K	Z	G	Q

Equations to solve

11	19	8	13	3	5	4	5		14	26	16	13	7		0	3	11	26
+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		-	-	-	-	-		+	+	+	-
4	3	2	9	6	6	18	5		6	25	4	8	5		7	8	5	10

9	25	3	24	7	22		12	15	12	26	1	2	4	3
+	-	+	-	+	-		-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
13	9	4	2	1	8		9	2	6	13	5	2	9	0

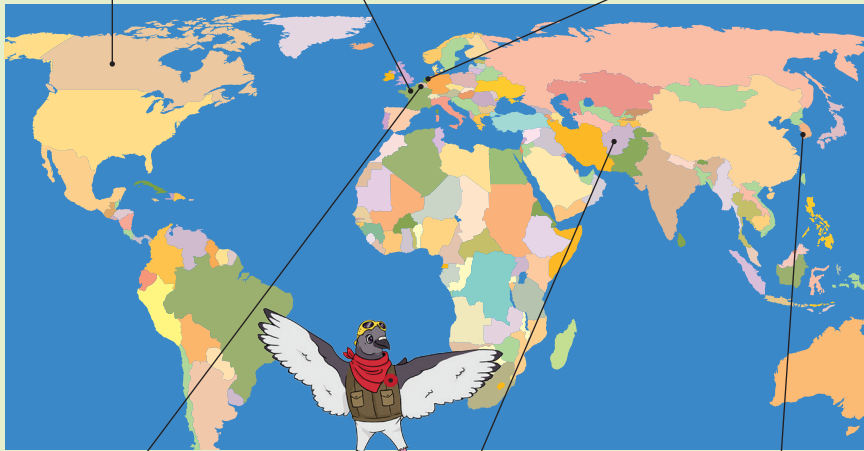


Unscramble Several countries are mentioned in the newspaper. Can you unscramble the letters to spell them?

A A A D N C

E A F R C N

H A E E N N S L R T D



B M U E G L I

A A A I F H G N N S T

R A E O K

Five keywords

Did you read the stories attentively? Look at each group of five keywords and associate what animal used those words in their stories.

Animals:

- Gandy • Simone • Bonfire Jr.
- Squeaker • Win • Ellie

Name	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name
Forgotten war	Edmonton	Highway	Sunrise	Tulip	Decoteau
United Nations	Poppy	Trenton	First Nations	Friendship	Cree
Sculptures	Gravestone	Respects	Métis	Canada	Police officer
Korea	Youth	Flags	Inuit	Netherlands	Olympics
Busan	Read	Half-mast	Reflect	Bloom	Passchendaele



Do you have a green thumb?

Some letters are missing from this alphabet. Find the missing letters and unscramble them to spell the name of a flower that symbolizes the friendship between Canada and the Netherlands.

A B C D E F G H J K M N O Q R S V W X Y Z

Missing letters

Flower