



THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES OF CANADA CELEBRATES ITS 150th BIRTHDAY IN 2010

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada will march into its 150th year of continuous service to the nation with a joyous New Year's Day levee held in all three of its messes in Toronto's Moss Park Armoury on New Year's Day. Similar activities are planned by Regimental Association Branches in British Columbia, Alberta and the Atlantic provinces.

In celebration of this significant anniversary for Canada's oldest continuously-serving infantry regiment, our Colonel-in-Chief, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, KG GCVO, will join the regimental family of The Queen's Own at events to take place in Victoria, Calgary and Toronto during the birthday week. Additionally a number of public events are being staged to showcase a regiment which has served Canada at home and abroad from 1860 to the present day.

The Colonel-in-Chief's week will begin in Victoria, BC, where, on Tuesday, 20 April, she will dedicate a plaque commemorating the presence of the Regular Force 1st Battalion The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada there from late 1963 until until rebadging to 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in 1970. Princess Alexandra will then attend an afternoon reception with all ranks of The Canadian Scottish, another regiment of which she is Colonel-in-Chief. A Reunion Dinner with the Vancouver Island Branch of The Queen's Own Rifles Association and their guests will take place in the evening.

A rest day has been planned in Victoria for 21 April before flying to Calgary on 22 April to a welcome from the Calgary Branch of the QOR Association. During an afternoon visit to the Calgary Museum of the Regiments she will rededicate a cairn previously located in Currie Barracks, home station for both Battalions of the Regular Army from 1954 to 1968 when the 2nd Battalion was removed from the Order of Battle. In the evening the Colonel-in-Chief will attend a Reunion Dinner with members and guests of the Calgary Branch of the QOR Association.

The following day, Thursday, 23 April, the Colonel-in-Chief and her party will take a late morning flight from Calgary to Toronto International Airport, arriving shortly before 5 pm and driving to the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel which will be her home for the next three nights, prior to her departure for home on 26 April.

In Toronto, on Saturday, 24 April, Her Royal Highness will be present at a reception at Casa Loma, the ancestral home of Sir Henry Pellatt, a former commanding officer of The Queen's Own, and the site of the Regimental Museum, which she will also visit. In the evening she will be guest of honour at a Reunion Dinner with the Toronto Branch of The QOR Association at the Harbour Castle Hilton and on Sunday, following a Regimental Church Parade, will attend the service at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Toronto. The Colonel-in-Chief's visit will come to a close following a family get-together at Moss Park Armoury that afternoon.

Public events during the Sesquicentennial Year will include "The Queen's Own Rifles Toronto Day", on Monday 26 April, 2010 and it is hoped to stage a number of concerts-in-the-park during the course of the year, featuring the Regimental Band and Bugles. Plans also include the possibility of staging concerts at Toronto's Yonge-Dundas Square and City Hall Square, with the Band and Bugles, the "Gentlemen Buglers and Drummers," a bugle band composed of former members of The Queen's Own Rifles Bugle Band, as well as demonstrations by The Queen's Own Rifles Skirmishers and Pioneers.

Plans are also underway to announce the establishment of an educational bursary in the name of Princess Alexandra, which will be initiated by funding from the 2010 Sesquicentennial Fund and administered and bolstered by the National Regimental Association. The first of the bursaries, honouring The Colonel-in-Chief's 50 years of service to her Regiment and to Canada, will be presented by Her Royal Highness in April, 2010 at various 150th anniversary events.





The Queen's Own Rifles mark D-Day+65



D-Day veterans Orville Cooke, Bill "Boots" Bettridge and Bill Ross exchange war stories during their visit to their former battlefields in Normandy.



Toronto Branch Association members Brian Budden and Dave Lavery are photographed with British D-Day veteran Cyril Crain at the memorial in Giberville, Normandy at a D-Day+65 ceremony. The memorial was built by Giberville schoolchildren as a World War Two commemorative project.



LCol John Fotheringham CD, MCpl Adam de Bartok, Cpl Shane Overholt and RSM Shaun Kelly CD at La Maison Queen's Own Rifles.

The 65th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland is in 2010

Plans are being made to join the 65th Anniversary of Holland Liberation ceremonies in 2010. A tour organized by Verstraete Travel will begin 1 May in Zutphen, ending 10 May. It will include ceremonies at Groesbeek and Holten Canadian War Cemeteries, Apeldoorn Parade, and visits to Sneek, Wons and Rha. For information: Brian Budden at 905-567-4975 Cell: 416-417-4975 email: brianbudden@rogers.com.



To Afghanistan and back ... safely



Members of The Queen's Own Rifles who have served in Afghanistan were taken to dinner at the Royal Canadian Military Institute by Honorary Colonel Paul F. Hughes CD during the recent Remembrance Day Weekend in Toronto.

Fine weather for Remembrance Church parade (for a change)



(Left) Sgt Craig Hood CD and Honorary LCol Dick Cowling CD, salute after laying wreaths at the Cross of Sacrifice. (Top right) Skirmisher MCpl Darnell Leader stands vigil as Honorary Col. Paul Hughes CD and Sgt Craig Hood CD salute after laying a wreath. (Bottom right) Last Post is sounded.



Markers of three Fenian Raid Queen's Own dead are dedicated



(L) Skirmisher MCpl Darnell Leader stands vigil. (R) Wreath placed, salutes are given by CO LCol John Fotheringham CD, HonCol Paul Hughes CD accompanied by Sgt Paul Hood CD.

The marking and dedication of the gravesites of three members of the regiment who died in battle with Fenian invaders in 1866 took place on Sunday, 8 November. Following the annual Remembrance Day Church Parade and service at St. Paul's the regiment marched to nearby Necropolis Cemetery where new markers had been placed to identify three of the nine who were killed

or died of wounds in the battle on 2 June, 1866 at Ridgeway, Ontario. The markers of the remaining six, who are buried elsewhere, will be similarly dedicated as part of the continuing 2010 celebrations. Funds to carry this out have been provided by Honorary Colonel Paul F. Hughes CD.



“Forgotten” fallen honoured at Calgary memorial

By Jamie Komarnicki, Calgary Herald

CALGARY - The 44 Canadian peacekeepers who died while serving in Korea following World War Two will now have a lasting tribute on the memorial wall in Calgary's Peacekeeper Park.

Their names have been added to the Wall of Honour at the park in the city's southwest neighbourhood of Garrison Green. At an Aug. 9 ceremony on Peacekeepers' Day new names which had recently been etched into the wall were also unveiled.

Korean War veteran Roland Soper says the recognition is long overdue. The 81-year-old raised the issue last year after he noticed the Korean peacekeepers' absence from the memorial wall, which also honours Canadian soldiers who died in Afghanistan.

The Korean War, which began on June 25, 1950, ended with an armistice on July 27, 1953. Of the 7,000 Canadians deployed in a peacekeeping role following the armistice, 44 died.

The Korea peacekeepers have earned their spot on the memorial wall, Soper said. "Their names deserve to be there, that's really the way it is. They were peacekeepers and they served in a very dangerous mission."

Retired Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Colonel Don Ethell of the Canadian Association of Veterans in United

Nations Peacekeeping (CAVNUP) said the addition of the Korea peacekeepers was a "matter of second thought."

Once the issue was brought to the association's attention, they began a fundraising effort to raise the cash necessary to add the names, said Ethell, considered to be Canada's most decorated peacekeeper.

Although it costs as much as \$1,000 a name for the engraving, the association, along with the Korea Veterans Association, raised the funds necessary. With a discount from the engraver, they were able to whittle the price tag to \$22,000. "We are delighted to do this. We had it within our wherewithal and our fundraising," Ethell said.

The memorial wall, started in 2004, was expected to have space to last more than six decades. Less than five years later, it was full, prompting the need for more space. Each year, family members of those fallen in Afghanistan attend a ceremony at Peacekeeper Park paying tribute to their loved ones.

Soper said he's pleased the 44 have finally received the recognition they've earned, and hopes Canadians learn more about the nation's role in the Korean War. "It used to be called the forgotten war, and sometimes I think it still is kind of forgotten, though not as much any more."

KVA wants to locate all veterans who served in the Korean War

Terry Wickens, national president of the Korea Veterans Association of Canada, says for the 2010 Korean War Commemoration period KVA hopes to identify and contact all living Korean War vets in Canada. The project, being implemented to mark next year's 60th anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration period, is jointly spearheaded by KVA Canada and the Korean Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA).

It's estimated almost 34,000 Canadians served in Korea -- 27,000 in the army, 5,000 in the RCN and 1,500 in the RCAF. It's believed only 10,000 are still alive.

"The MPVA, which is spearheading the 2010 commemoration programs for the ROK Commemoration

Committee, knows that because of age and health conditions, many Veterans can no longer make the long journey to Korea to participate in the planned ceremonies and services," Wickens said.

"So the MPVA has proposed to bring Korea to Canada, and meet with those veterans who cannot travel because of health or personal financial conditions. Their plan is to help fund local ceremonies and to co-sponsor events where the Korean Ambassador of Peace Medals will be awarded to qualified veterans."

KVA Canada plans to hold a major national service at the Korea Veterans National Wall of Remembrance in Brampton on July 27, 2010. Information should be sent to terrywickens@sympatico.ca.



Vancouver Island Branch links up with the Dutch “A Team”

MGen Herb Pitts MC, President Queen's Own Rifles of Canada National Association

Adrian Hovestad, a Dutch immigrant to Canada, a former sergeant in the Dutch Army and member of the Branch 10 Nanaimo Legion, recently visited Doorn, the village where he was born. He was 11 years old when his hometown was liberated by The Queen's Own Rifles and he well remembers the bren gun carriers rumbling into town and the excitement. During his trip this year he visited the local commemorative area and noticed a Queen's Own memorial plaque in the “Remembrance” setting, all of which he felt needed “housekeeping.”

Queries to the municipal officials about the appearance of the memorial area got no results, so he contacted the local newspaper, which did a story about Adrian's wartime experiences and his dismay at finding the liberators' memorial neglected.

The response was immediate. One which particularly appealed to Adrian was from a Dutch Marine chaplain, on behalf of his ten year old son. The boy had offered assistance from him and five friends of a like age, to take on the care of this memorial area -- in perpetuity. They refer to themselves as the “A Team.”

Through the efforts of Bill Brayshaw, President, Vancouver Island QOR Association and other Branch members, the offer made by the youngsters has been acknowledged by sending the “A Team” members QOR baseball caps, T-Shirts and QOR of C National Association lapel pins.

Bill, who is also president of the Nanaimo Legion, invited Adrian to attend our regular monthly Branch luncheon in Victoria and he was invited to attend our Octoberfest event. We plan to keep in touch with him.

LCol Steve Brand, our European memorials go-to-guy, currently in Afghanistan, is in touch with a Dutch Marine Battalion which is stationed near Doorn. Hopefully, a liaison will be set up to strengthen relations and provide help for the boys -- if needed.

What a great opportunity to link generations in the common cause of Remembrance! I would recommend that any of our tours in future should go through Doorn to meet and thank the young men who so willingly volunteered their help in keeping the memory of heroism and sacrifice by The Queen's Own, front and centre.



Dutch army veteran Adrian Hovestad, who was in Holland when The Queen's Own liberated it after D-Day found his hometown's Queen's Own memorial plaque needed some TLC.



Two of the Dutch ten-year-old boys who volunteered to keep the memorial clean and presentable – in perpetuity.



The Westerners are ready for the 150th Birthday

MGen Herb Pitts MC., President, Queen's Own Rifles of Canada National Association

News from Vancouver Island Branch has been both good and bad. We've made some gains and suffered some losses. We'd better get used to it.

Preparations are well in hand for the 150th Anniversary Celebrations in Victoria in April 2010. Our gathering is one of three being held. They are here, Calgary and Toronto. Our event starts with a Meet and Greet on the evening of 19th April, unveiling of cairns and the Birthday Dinner on the 20th (with our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH Princess Alexandra present.) While some details still have to be worked out, information on how to attend can be had by contacting Ed Titus, 3180 Pearkes Rd., Victoria, B.C., V9C 2L8, tel: 250-478-6426 or cetus@telus.net.

Our Members choosing to join the Regimental National Association now number 179. Lapel pins signifying national membership have been distributed to these members. This number augurs very well for the future of both the local Branch and the National body.

The 149th Birthday Celebration was, again, a well attended affair with about 160 present at the Langford

Legion. Catering, Cake and Company were excellent! The 50- 50 draw this year was won by Bill Fowler. The whole evening was arranged by Jim Carroll before his death less than four weeks earlier and was a tribute to his organizing ability and dedication to the Branch. Bill Brayshaw and Ed Titus deserve special thanks for taking effective management of the Celebration.

Upcoming events. Our OKTOBER FEST was scheduled to be held in the Langford Legion on 17 October and our AGM will be on 16 January, 2010, at the same location. Our monthly luncheons are on the last Wednesday of each month at the Gorge Legion. All riflemen are welcome to attend and details can be secured from Ed Titus at the contact numbers above.

LAST POST Members who have passed away since this time last year are Sgt Norm Bastin, Sgt Donald Black, Capt Doug Rogers, Sgt Ray Charron, WO Ken Tucker, Sgt Bernie Campbell, Sgt Harry Lloy, Sgt John Carson, MCpl Bill Noseworthy, Sgt Bill Reed, Cpl Jim Smith, Maj Geoff Costeloe, Rfn Ron Campbell, Cpl Garfield Pinkerton, CWO Jim Carroll and Rfn Ross Clark.

Remembering Jim Carroll

The loss of Jim Carroll, our membership chairman, was a heavy blow to the Branch and those in the community who knew him. His contribution to the Branch in many, many ways is reflected in the strength and vitality of our group of Riflemen. Support for each other has become an important aspect of our gatherings and was reflected in the very large numbers who attended his Celebration of Life on the 6 April. Large numbers of those who knew Jim in other Regiments, the Legion and in the Saanich Police Service were present as well. Jim will be missed but he helped build a firm basis for future development.



IN MEMORIAM

Bernie Campbell

Ross Clark

C.D. Dakin

Tom Eagle

Philip LeBreton

John Lindsay

George Miller

Bill Noseworthy

Pat O'Brien

Abe Offert

William Pankhurst

Garfield Pinkerton

Ken Scott

Jim Smith

Joseph Roy Smole



A WELCOME DONATION FOR 2010 FROM THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS

The Regimental Association and Branches of The Queen's Own Buffs (PWRR –The Royal Kent Regiment) have written to Captain Adam Hermant, President of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Trust Fund, enclosing a significant donation in support of our 2010 Sesquicentennial birthday celebrations.

In forwarding the donation, Major (Ret'd) Peter R. White MM, noted that the contributions came from the following: The Regimental Association of The Queen's Own Buffs, the London Buffs and Association branches in Canterbury, Ramsgate, Sittingbourne and Weald.

Captain Hermant, said that, "We are truly delighted and most grateful to have received this donation. It reinforces

the ties we have with our allied regimental associations and in this case, in particular, for over 100 years."

In his letter, Major White said that, "Your members may care to know that our Association members Turn the Page every day in the Warriors' Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral and every Monday, and on special days, a page is Turned in The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Book of Life. It has been my privilege to Turn the Page twice this year".

In addition, Major White suggested, "If any of your members do come to the UK we would be delighted to welcome them to Canterbury and to arrange for them to Turn the Page."

QUEEN'S OWN KIT SHOP OPENS A "SECOND FRONT" IN QUEBEC

Beginning in late October, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada joined numerous other Canadian military units by establishing its Regimental Kit Shop with Joe Drouin Enterprises in Quebec. The kit shop at Moss Park Armoury in Toronto will be open only as an order office. Orders placed there through Andy Macnaughton will be filled by Drouin. Items specific to the 150th anniversary in 2010 will be available beginning in December, 2009.

Andy will be available on Wednesday parade nights from 7-10 pm to showcase the items available and will also be present, upon request, at most special functions held by any of the Regimental organizations.

Regimental Members may order direct as fol-

lows: website joe@joedrouin.com; telephone 819-568-6669; fax 819-568-1074. Drouin Enterprises can also be contacted by writing to Joe Drouin Enterprises, 36 de Varennes, Unit 3, Gatineau, Quebec, J8T 0B6.

Payments by money order or personal cheque or, for faster delivery, by Visa or MasterCard. Showroom visitors may also use bank debit cards. Anyone in the area is welcome to the showroom in Gatineau, during regular business hours, 8am to 4pm, Monday-Friday.

NOTE: The new book, "The Bands of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada (1860-2010)" will be available ONLY through the MPA kit shop at qorkitshop@bellnet.ca, tel. 416-362-3946. Price \$55.00 plus shipping and handling..



Guests at RCL Branch 258 in Highland Creek, Miss Canada Tourism 2009, Seraphima Malkina, (left) and Miss Toronto Tourism 2009, Haylie McCulloch, are welcomed to the 1 July Heritage Day parade by RSM (ret) Brian Budden CD and Dave Lavery.

Help us find Queen's Own Vets

Former Queen's Own Rifles RSM/CWO Brian Budden CD will be the point of contact in a campaign to track down all surviving members of The Queen's Own who served overseas during World War Two, particularly those who landed on D-Day. This is being done to ensure that they are all aware of what is being planned for the celebration of the regiment's 150th birthday in 2010.

While we have done as much as possible to ensure the master mailing list is complete, there is no doubt that we are missing the names of a large number of veterans and we'd like to remedy that.

We are asking all of you to think about this and to let us know if you are aware of anyone you know who might not be on the mailing list – World War Two veteran or otherwise -- and to let RSM Budden know who that is, with a mailing or e-mail address, if you can. We are particularly anxious to have as complete a list of surviving D-Day veterans as possible, but we need your help to do this.

It's apparent that, in addition to RSM Budden, in his role as chair of the Sick and Welfare committee of the Toronto Association Branch, members of the regiment already do a

very good job of keeping in touch with veterans. Former CO LCol John Strathy CD noted recently that he has been in touch with Major Peter Rea, who was a subaltern in Battalion Headquarters on D-Day and was wounded three times in the first two days of the invasion. LCol Strathy had invited Maj Rea to lunch but he declined with thanks on the grounds that "I seldom leave the house except for emergencies, such as medical. I suppose that is to be expected at 93."

Also, Toronto Branch President Bob Dunk promised to send association members to spend time with D-Day B Company veteran Edward Butler after his daughter wrote to say that she believed her father felt quite alone after the death of his wife. He was added to the mailing list and back copies of Rifleman and Powder Horn were mailed to him, to bring him up to date on recent occurrences and future activities.

As Dunk says: "They're all part of the regimental family. We should keep in touch." RSM Budden can be reached by telephone at 905-567-4975, by e-mail at brian.budden@rogers.com and by Canada Post at 3234 Equestrian Cres., Mississauga, ON, L5M 6S8.

Queen's Own rifleman/oarsman is National Champion

It was a big week on the water for Bayside Rowing Club's and Queen's Own Rifleman Matthew Buie, as he claimed the under-23 men singles championship at the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta in St. Catharines on Friday 7 August. The regatta featured the best rowers from Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Mexico, Argentina and Peru.

"This is huge for Matt," said Bayside Head Coach Dominic Kahn, adding that the regatta is the national championship for club rowers. "He went out against the best of the best, and came out on top." "It feels great," said Buie, who only started rowing a year and a half ago. "All of the training and hard work has paid off." Buie was quick to thank his coach and teammates for keeping rowing fun, and said his goal for the National Rowing Championships in November is to lower his 2km race time from 7:13.14 (his winning time at Henley) to seven minutes.

In addition to his training with The Queen's Own, Rfn Buie also coaches in the Toronto-based club's "Learn-to-Row Quads" program for those looking to learn the skills of rowing as well as getting a great workout.



WILL YOU BE THERE?

To celebrate our 150th Anniversary in 2010, The Queen's Own is staging events in various parts of Canada throughout the year. In addition a Reunion in Toronto is planned for 23-25 April.

Friday, 23 April, 1800hrs - 2400hrs: Meet & Greet on the parade square at Moss Park Armoury, 130 Queen Street E. Toronto. Military equipment display including vehicles, weapons and uniforms representing our 150 years of service to Canada. Casual atmosphere. Roast beef on a bun with salad or vegetarian lasagna will be served buffet style.

The Queen's Own's Gentlemen Buglers and Drummers will entertain.

Saturday, 24 April, 0700hrs - 1000hrs: Buffet breakfast at the Westin Harbour Castle. Bus tours to tour Casa Loma, the Regimental Museum and the Sergeants' and Officers' Messes at Moss Park Armoury from 1000hrs - 1600hrs.

Saturday, 24 April, 1800hrs - 0100hrs: 150th Anniversary Dinner & Dance at the Westin Harbour Castle.

Our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH Princess Alexandra KG CGVO will be in attendance. Guest speaker will be Major General Lewis MacKenzie CM CMM MSC and bar O.Ont CD.

Sunday, 25 April. Regimental Church Parade and Service at St. Paul's Anglican Church followed by a reception at Moss Park Armoury. HRH Princess Alexandra will attend.

With the purchase of an all-inclusive weekend ticket, you will enjoy all of the above and more and all for only \$175.00 per person. You also have the option of purchasing a dinner/dance only ticket for \$100.00 per person.

Order your tickets now by mailing cheque or money order made out to "QOR Association 2010" to: QOR Association, 364 Old Kingston Road, PO Box 97518, Toronto, ON M1C 1B0.

Please ensure that you provide us with the full name of each person for whom you are purchasing a ticket. Provisions will be made shortly to accept credit card payments.

Please check the website at www.qor2010.com for updates.

Book your room at the Westin Harbour Castle NOW! A third of our allotted rooms are already booked. Don't be disappointed. Visit our website to book online or call the Westin directly at 416-869-1600 and mention the Queen's Own Rifles to get our special rate.

Information and Registration www.qor2010.com or call 416-621-7231



THE BANDS OF THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES OF CANADA (1860-2010)



by Charles McGregor
with Ian Pearson



Queen's Own Rifles Honorary Colonel Paul Hughes CD presents a copy of the new band book to WO Ted O'Halloran CD in the Sergeants' Mess. D-Day veteran O'Halloran has been a member of The Queen's Own buglers for over 70 years and is featured prominently in the book.

NOW AVAILABLE!

The Bands of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada (1860-2010)

Commissioned to mark the 150th anniversary in 2010
of The Queen's Own Rifles
this hardcover book is a lively and highly entertaining
account of the Military and Bugle Bands
of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada since 1860.

Rare photographs from years gone by.

*Includes a one-hour CD of 24 selections of music recorded
by The Queen's Own Rifles bands since the early 1970s.*

Order your copy now by emailing
the Regimental Kit Shop at qorkitshop@bellnet.ca
or by calling 416-362-3946.

Price: \$55.00 plus tax and shipping costs.

OR visit the Kit Shop at
Moss Park Armoury, 130 Queen St. E, Toronto
(north entrance) between 7-10 pm on Wednesdays.

Price \$55 plus tax.



British writer salutes Canada for “being Canadian”

Kevin Myers, 'The Sunday Telegraph'

LONDON: Until the deaths of Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan, probably almost no one outside their home country had been aware that Canadian troops are deployed in the region.

And as always, Canada will bury its dead, just as the rest of the world, as always will forget its sacrifice, just as it always forgets nearly everything Canada ever does. It seems that Canada's historic mission is to come to the selfless aid both of its friends and of complete strangers, and then, once the crisis is over, to be well and truly ignored.

Canada is the perpetual wallflower that stands on the edge of the hall, waiting for someone to come and ask her for a dance. A fire breaks out, she risks life and limb to rescue her fellow dance-goers, and suffers serious injuries. But when the hall is repaired and the dancing resumes, there is Canada, the wallflower still, while those she once helped glamorously cavort across the floor, blithely neglecting her yet again.

That is the price Canada pays for sharing the North American continent with the United States, and for being a selfless friend of Britain in two global conflicts.

For much of the 20th century, Canada was torn in two different directions: It seemed to be a part of the old world, yet had an address in the new one, and that divided identity ensured that it never fully got the gratitude it deserved.

Yet its purely voluntary contribution to the cause of freedom in two world wars was perhaps the greatest of any democracy. Almost ten per cent of Canada's entire population of seven million people served in the armed forces during the First World War, and nearly 60,000 died. The great Allied victories of 1918 were spearheaded by Canadian troops, perhaps the most capable soldiers in the entire British order of battle.

Canada was repaid for its enormous sacrifice by down-right neglect, its unique contribution to victory being absorbed into the popular memory as somehow or other the work of the British.

The Second World War provided a re-run. The Canadian navy began the war with a half dozen vessels, and ended up policing nearly half of the Atlantic against U-boat attack. More than 120 Canadian warships participated in the Normandy landings, during which 15,000 Canadian soldiers went ashore on D-Day alone. Canada finished the war with the third-largest navy and the fourth largest air force in the world. The world thanked Canada with the same sublime indifference as it had the previous time.

Canadian participation in the war was acknowledged in film only if it was necessary to give an American actor a part in a campaign in which the United States had clearly not participated - a touching scrupulousness which, of course, Hollywood has since abandoned, as it has any notion of a separate Canadian identity.

So it is a general rule that actors and filmmakers arriving in Hollywood keep their nationality - unless, that is, they are Canadian. Thus Mary Pickford, Walter Huston, Donald Sutherland, Michael J. Fox, William Shatner, Norman Jewison, David Cronenberg, Alex Trebek, Art Linkletter and Dan Aykroyd have in the popular perception become American, and Christopher Plummer, British.

It is as if, in the very act of becoming famous, a Canadian ceases to be Canadian, unless she is Margaret Atwood, who is as unshakably Canadian as a moose, or Celine Dion, for whom Canada has proved quite unable to find any takers.

Moreover, Canada is every bit as querulously alert to the achievements of its sons and daughters as the rest of the world is completely unaware of them. The Canadians proudly say of themselves - and are unheard by anyone else - that one per cent of the world's population has provided ten per cent of the world's peace-keeping forces.

Canadian soldiers in the past half century have been the greatest peacekeepers on Earth - in 39 missions on UN mandates, and six on non-UN peacekeeping duties, from Vietnam to East Timor, from Sinai to Bosnia.

Yet the only foreign engagement that has entered the popular non-Canadian imagination was the sorry affair in Somalia, in which out-of-control paratroopers murdered two Somali infiltrators. Their regiment was then disbanded in disgrace - a uniquely Canadian act of self-abasement for which, naturally, the Canadians received no international credit.

So who today in the United States knows about the stoic and selfless friendship its northern neighbour has given it in Afghanistan?

Rather like Cyrano de Bergerac, Canada repeatedly does honourable things for honourable motives, but instead of being thanked for it, it remains something of a figure of fun. It is the Canadian way, for which Canadians should be proud, yet such honour comes at a high cost. This past year more grieving Canadian families knew that cost all too tragically well.

Lest we forget.