THE BEECHWOOD WAY MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2025 • Vol. 33

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BEECHWOOD

Letter from the editor

Dear Beechwood Community,

As we look to the future, Beechwood stands proudly at the intersection of history and progress. With deep gratitude for your ongoing support, we are now preparing for a pivotal chapter in our national journey, one that not only honours our past but also shapes the legacy we leave for the next 150 years.

In 2026, we will mark the 25th anniversary of the National Military Cemetery, a symbol of our national identity and a powerful symbol of remembrance. This milestone will serve as a moment to reflect on a quarter-century of honouring service and sacrifice, and to recommit ourselves to the values that define us as Canadians.

We are equally proud to announce another historic moment: the first-ever citizenship ceremony held at the RCMP National Memorial Cemetery. This ceremony, on June 27, 2025, welcomed new Canadians on sacred ground, tying their future to the stories of those who have served and protected our communities. It will be a powerful expression of national unity and shared purpose.

In addition, we continue to grow our "Under the Maple Leaf – Respecting the Canadian Flag" initiative. What began as an inaugural event, on June 18, 2025, at sunset, is now a perpetual national program, offering all Canadians a dignified way to retire their flags. This program not only reflects our collective respect for the Maple Leaf, but also reinforces Beechwood's role as a guardian of national symbols and memory.

Each of these moments, milestones in their own right, are made possible because of you. Your generosity empowers us to remain future-focused while grounded in remembrance. It allows us to maintain Beechwood as a national place of gathering, reflection, and celebration.

As the National Cemetery of Canada, Beechwood is not only a place where stories are remembered, it is also where new chapters begin. With your continued partnership, we will ensure that the next century and a half is marked by dignity, inclusivity, and a deep reverence for all who have helped shape this nation.

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- YouTube (Beechwood Cemetery)

We hope you enjoy this issue, knowing that each story, ceremony, and initiative within these pages was made possible because of you..

Thank you for being part of this enduring journey.
Nick McCarthy
Director of Marketing, Communications and Community Outreach

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All photos taken on behalf of Beechwood Cemetery Foundation by Staff, Richard Lawrence Photography, and Nathan Pigeon Photography.

ISSN 2368-545X, 2368-5468

The Beechwood Way Magazine is a free, independent publication and, unless otherwise clearly stated, its articles imply no endorsement of any product or service. The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and will issue an income tax receipt for donations of $20 or more. Registration number 88811 2018 RR0001.

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We want your feedback on how we are doing!

Contact: Erika Wagner at foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca

Publications Agreement number 42640528 Please return undeliverable Canadian addresses to The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation. 280 Beechwood Ave, Ottawa ON K1L 8A6.

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Honouring a Proud Legacy: Official Opening of the RCMP Veterans' Legacy Pathway

by Nicolas McCarthy, Director of Marketing, Communications, and Community Outreach

On the morning of May 23, 2025, dignitaries, RCMP Veterans, families, and supporters gathered at the RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood for the official unveiling of the RCMP Veterans' Legacy Pathway. The ceremony marked a significant milestone in preserving and celebrating the legacy of those who served in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The ceremony began with opening remarks from RCMP Veteran Marc Dureau, who set the tone for a reflective and reverent event. RCMP Elder Jim Potts delivered a land acknowledgement and Indigenous welcome, accompanied by the Eagle Staff carried by RCMP Veteran Jeff Poulette. RCMP Veteran Garth Hampson followed with a powerful rendition of the national anthem, grounding the event in Canadian pride.

A Pathway Built on History and Honour

RCMP Veteran Christine Windover introduced the Legacy Pathway, a vision brought to life to recognize and share the storied journey of the RCMP. The pathway features ten commemorative granite monoliths, quarried from the same site as the Parliament Buildings, anchoring the RCMP's legacy within Canada's national identity.

Each stone includes bilingual plaques detailing major chapters in RCMP history:

1. **North-West Mounted Police (1873–1903):** Traces the Force's founding and role in Western expansion, law enforcement, and treaty facilitation.
2. **Royal North-West Mounted Police (1904–1919):** Details the expansion into the Arctic and contributions to World War and **Royal Canadian Mounted Police (1920–1938):** Marks the merger with the Dominion Police and modernization efforts.
3. **RCMP During WWII (1939–1973):** Highlights wartime service, including the ST ROCH's Arctic voyages and post-war growth.
4. **Modernization & Multiculturalism (1974–1998):** Chronicles the shift toward diversity, community policing, and international peacekeeping roles.
5. **The Contemporary RCMP (1999–Present):** Addresses evolving challenges like terrorism and reconciliation with Indigenous communities.
6. **RCMP Veterans' Association Crest:** Central to the Pathway, the crest symbolizes honour, service, and unity.

At the heart of the Pathway is the RCMP Veterans' Association crest, unveiled by veterans Jack Briscoe, Mel Oickle, Ralph Mahar, and Fred Lyle, with remarks from RCMP Veteran David Jeggo. The crest and Pathway offer a national space for reflection, remembrance, and education.

Following the official ribbon-cutting, dignitaries including Senator Beverly Busson, Veterans Affairs Canada's Robert Löken, Assistant Commissioner Robert Gilchrist, Brigadier General Vanessa Hanrahan, and others symbolically opened the site. Mounted RCMP members traversed the Pathway while the RCMP Pipes & Drums played the Regimental March, a poignant reminder of tradition and service.

Remarks from RCMP Veterans Association President Sandra Conlin, Assistant Commissioner Gilchrist, and Beechwood's Nicolas McCarthy echoed themes of legacy, renewal, and national pride.

Recognizing Supporters Project Chair RCMP Veteran Kevin Mole delivered donor acknowledgements and unveiled the commemorative donor plaque alongside RCMP Veterans Michel Pelletier and Louise Morel. Their leadership exemplifies true civic responsibility and enduring respect for Canada's national police force.

Closing Moments Chaplain Pierre Bélanger offered a heartfelt blessing of the Pathway, followed by a performance of the Royal Anthem by Garth Hampson. Marc Dureau returned to close the ceremony, thanking all in attendance and reaffirming the lasting value of remembrance.

The RCMP Veterans' Legacy Pathway is more than a commemorative installation—it is a national testament to honour, a public archive of RCMP service, and a living tribute to the enduring bond between those who have worn the uniform and the country they served.

It stands now as a permanent part of Canada's heritage at Beechwood Cemetery, inviting generations to learn, reflect, and honour.

A New Chapter of Remembrance - Unveiling the National Military Cemetery Columbaria

by Chief Warrant Officer, Jules Bérubé, National Military Cemetery

On the morning of May 12, 2025, the National Military Cemetery of Canada at Beechwood marked a profound milestone with the official unveiling of its newest addition, a columbarium dedicated to Canada's military service members and their families. This elegant and solemn space stands not only as a physical structure, but as a national promise kept: to provide every Canadian Armed Forces member with a dignified final resting place.

We were honoured to gather on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg people, with deep respect for their history and enduring connection to this land.

The ceremony began with opening remarks from Master of Ceremonies Nicolas McCarthy, Director of Marketing, Communications and Community Outreach at Beechwood Cemetery, who welcomed guests and acknowledged the sacredness of the occasion:

"Today, we unveil and consecrate a new sacred space within this National Military Cemetery. These columbaria are far more than architectural features — they are places of memory, honouring the service, sacrifice, and legacy of Canada's military."

Located in outdoor Section 103 of the cemetery, the new columbarium offers 384 niches, each designed to hold the cremated remains of a Canadian Armed Forces member or veteran and one immediate family member. Each niche will feature an engraved service badge to provide a personalized, permanent tribute — a fitting continuation of military tradition and national gratitude.

Following a moment of silence, the Last Post, and the Rouse — all time-honoured elements of Canadian remembrance ceremonies — the ribbon-cutting ceremony was held and led by:

- Lieutenant-General S.R. Kelsey, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS)
- Commodore Daniel Bouchard, Director General Military Transition
- Colonel Kevin Goudie, Director Casualty Support Management
- Mr. Andrew Roy, President of Beechwood Cemetery

Their participation symbolized the joint efforts of the Canadian Armed Forces and Beechwood Cemetery to meet the evolving needs of military families.

Commodore Bouchard, our honoured speaker, delivered powerful remarks on the significance of the columbarium as a place of peace and remembrance, underscoring the CAF's continued commitment to providing meaningful end-of-life support to all who serve:

"This new Columbarium offers a dignified and serene resting place, ensuring that every member — regardless of when or how they served — has a place of honour among their peers. It is also a place where families can return, not only to grieve, but to reflect and draw strength from the legacy of service that lives on here."

Following the speech, a wreath-laying ceremony paid tribute to those interred and those yet to come.

The event closed with the singing of the national anthem and a final invitation to explore the new space and reflect quietly.

This columbarium stands as a modern, dignified option for those who have proudly worn the uniform. The National Military Cemetery will continue to grow, grounded in its mission to preserve dignity, honour service, and enshrine memory.

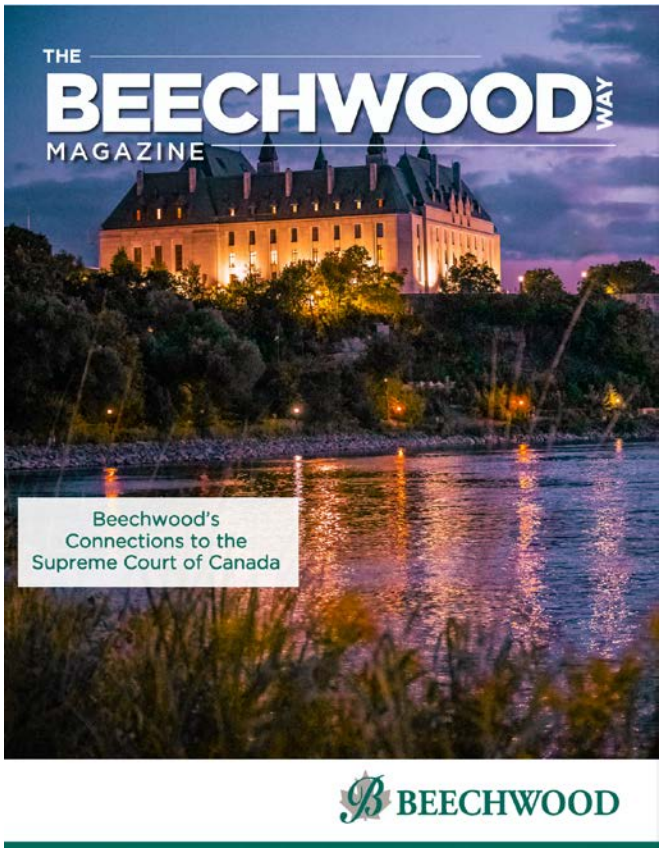
New eBook Highlights the Deep Connection Between Beechwood and the Supreme Court of Canada

Beechwood Cemetery is proud to announce the release of a new eBook, Beechwood and the Supreme Court of Canada. This publication explores the historic and enduring relationship between Canada's highest court and its National Cemetery.

For more than a century, Beechwood has served as the final resting place for Justices of the Supreme Court of Canada, including Chief Justices and legal pioneers who helped shape the Canadian legal system. The eBook offers readers a deeper understanding of the Court's evolution and the lives of the remarkable individuals who contributed to the nation's legal foundation.

With historical insights and biographies, this eBook is both a tribute and an educational resource. It underscores Beechwood's role in preserving the stories of those who upheld justice at the highest level.

Download your copy today and discover how the legacy of Canada's legal leaders lives on at Beechwood Cemetery.



Beechwood's Annual Living Library: Celebrating Canada's Trailblazers

by Erika Wagner

Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa is set to host its Annual Living Library event on Sunday, September 7, 2025, from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM. This immersive historical tour, presented in partnership with the Ottawa School of Theatre, offers visitors a unique opportunity to engage with the stories of four remarkable Canadians whose legacies have shaped the nation's history.

The Living Library format transforms Beechwood Cemetery into a dynamic storytelling venue. Attendees will receive a map upon arrival, guiding them through the cemetery's grounds to various stations where actors perform vignettes portraying the lives of these trailblazers. This self-guided tour allows participants to explore at their own pace, engaging directly with the performers to delve deeper into the historical narratives.

Featured Trailblazers

Ruth Margaret Spencer (1909–2000)

Ruth Margaret Spencer was a pioneering Canadian librarian and World War II veteran. In 1946, she became the first professional librarian at Canada House in London, UK, establishing a library that served as a reference centre for both the High Commission's staff and the British public interested in Canadian affairs. After returning to Canada in 1950, she was appointed Chief Librarian of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA), a position she held until 1953. She continued her work part-time during her children's early years and later established and maintained the library at St. Clement's School in Ottawa. Ruth passed away in Ottawa on July 2, 2000.

Shirley Moulds (1904–1973)

Shirley Moulds was a pioneering athlete in the 1920s, excelling in women's hockey. She played for the Ottawa Ladies' Hockey Club, leading her team to multiple championships and breaking barriers for women in sports during that era. Her contributions were instrumental in the development and recognition of women's hockey in Canada.

Lawrence Morris Lambe (1863–1919)

Lawrence Morris Lambe was a Canadian paleontologist and geologist whose work significantly contributed to the understanding of prehistoric life in Canada. In 1897, he was the first to systematically search for dinosaur fossils in what is now Dinosaur Provincial Park in Alberta. His discoveries led to the identification of several dinosaur species, including Lambeosaurus, Centrosaurus, and Edmontosaurus. Lambe's research laid the foundation for future paleontological studies in Canada.

James Wilson Robertson (1857–1930)

James Wilson Robertson was a Scottish-born Canadian educator and agricultural reformer who played a pivotal role in the development of Canada's dairy industry. After emigrating to Canada in 1875, he became a professor of dairying at the Ontario Agricultural College and later served as Canada's first Commissioner of Agriculture and Dairying. He introduced innovative practices such as the use of silos and cooperative dairying, significantly improving the quality and export potential of Canadian dairy products. Robertson was also instrumental in the establishment of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association and Macdonald College.

Event Details

- Date: Sunday, September 7, 2025
- Time: 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (arrive before 3:00 PM to fully enjoy the experience)
- Location: Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa, Ontario (starting location to be announced)
- Format: Self-guided tour with interactive performances
- Cost: Free admission

Visitor Recommendations

- Dress appropriately for the weather: Comfortable clothing and footwear are advised.
- Bring sunscreen and bug spray: To ensure a pleasant outdoor experience.

This event offers a rare opportunity to connect with Canada's rich history through the lives of individuals who have left a long-lasting mark on the nation. Whether you're a history enthusiast, a family looking for an educational outing, or someone interested in the stories that have shaped Canada, the Living Library event at Beechwood Cemetery promises an enriching experience.

For more information, please contact the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation at 613-741-9530 or email foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca. No registration is needed — simply arrive and step into history.

From left to right: Amien Mohamed, Olivie Chertte, Samyia Birol, Valenca Blanch, Eamon Lekovic, and Peter Kenward-Park. Photo taken by Peter Kenward-Park.

Macoun Marsh Cleanup

by Peter Kenward-Park

As part of a recent school project, several students from Canterbury High School participated in a cleanup of Macoun Marsh. As part of the Outdoor Ed program at Canterbury, students are required to create a project that will promote biodiversity in their local communities. To this end, one of the students, Peter Kenward-Park, decided to organize the cleanup of Macoun Marsh. As a resident of Manor Park, Peter regularly walks around the cemetery with his grandmother. As such, he has a vested interest in preserving the marsh and cemetery for generations to come.

Macoun Marsh itself has been a field trip destination for a local school, St-Laurent Academy, and is well used by many in the local area. In 2006, a number of schools in the local area came together to construct an outdoor classroom on the site. For their efforts, Macoun Marsh won both the 2008 Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award, and the Youth Mentorship Award from the Canadian Wildlife Federation. However, after years of usage, trash in certain areas has begun to accumulate. In the long term, this trash poses a serious threat to the thousands of animals that call the marsh home.

The idea for this project came from local science teacher Michael Leveille. Mike has been a driving factor in preserving the marsh and was instrumental in the construction of the outdoor classroom. For many years, he has taken students to the marsh to help clean it up. The help and advice he provided were instrumental to the project.

The clean-up took place on May 24th, between 1:00 and 3:00 pm. The main area of focus was the north and northeast sections of the marsh, near the power substation. In the two hours, seven bags of trash were collected.

The project was a major success; it is quite likely that much of the trash that was collected will be replaced with new trash over the next couple of years. Therefore, it will be with the support of members of the local community that this unique Wetland will be maintained.

Events Calendar

*For further details and to register, visit Events at beechwoodottawa.ca

After Death Café – 17 August at 1:00pm

The Beechwood Stroll (East Half) – 31 August at 1:00pm

Honouring Soldiers of Suicide – 6 September at 7:00pm

Annual Living Library – Trailblazers – 7 September 2:00–3:30pm

Capital Pop Up Cinema – The Great Dictator – 19 September – 7:30pm

The Beechwood Stroll (West Half) – 28 September (West half) at 1:00pm

Anne Frank – A History for Today - Exhibition at Beechwood National Memorial Centre – October 18–20th

4th Annual Remembrance Ceremony for the Latin-American Community in Canada – October 19 at 10:45am